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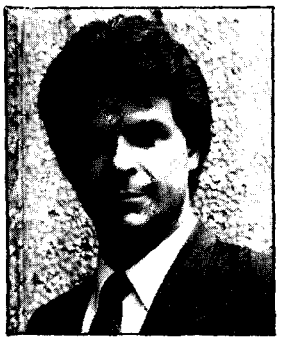

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FROM WASHINGTON

MORE HYPE THAN HEAT

For six years I've been reading about young Joe Kennedy's nonprofit oil company in Boston, which buys tankerfuls of petroleum from producing nations, cuts out the middleman, and sells cheap heating oil to poor people. Thus he melds the idealism of his father Bobby and Uncle Jack with the entrepreneurial spirit of his grandfather and namesake to create a private-sector alternative for government social programs. "Every time I get near government, it strikes me that it just doesn't work," this Kennedy has said. An irresistible story.

For six years, though, I've been wondering: if Kennedy's scheme works, why aren't there young non-Kennedy entrepreneurs out there buying tankers of petroleum, cutting out the middleman, and *not* passing on the savings to the poor? Somehow it sounds like the old joke about the guy who loses money on every sale but makes it up in volume. Well it turns out that Kennedy's company, called Citizens Energy Corporation, is not a fraud or a shell game. But it's an operation that generates a lot more hype than heat.

Kennedy's basic technique (there are variants) is to buy crude oil on the world market, arrange for it to be refined into a variety of products, and sell everything but the heating oil to the refinery at market prices. Then he uses the profit on this part of the transaction to subsidize the heating oil, which he sells to the Massachusetts state fuel oil assistance program at about one-third off.

His first deal, in 1979, was with Venezuela, which sold Citizens two million barrels of crude for the official OPEC price of $31 a barrel at a time when the spot market price was $37. This was not a strictly business transaction. Kennedy's name, his family connections in Venezuela, and the do-gooder nature of the enterprise all played a role.

It's easy to see how you can make money buying something for $31 that's actually worth $37. But what about more recent years, when the spot price usually has been *below* the market price? Kennedy's people insist that they're paying commercial prices for their crude, not taking charity. So how do they make the money they need to sell the heating oil at a discount? "It's increasingly difficult," says William James, a former Peace Corps volunteer who runs this operation. "Almost impossible." Steven Rothstein, general manager of Citizens Energy, said he couldn't disclose the details for competitive reasons. James did say that in the case of one supplier—the Soviet Union—it's "just about a break-even thing," done solely to "open up a dialogue" between the superpowers.

In the past year or so, Kennedy has started a similar operation with natural gas. In this case, the magic is less mysterious. It has to do with price controls. To greatly simplify: the price of "old gas," from wells that predate 1978, is controlled. As a result, this gas costs less than half as much as "new gas," which is not controlled. Pipeline companies are required to sell their gas to local utilities at a "blended" price reflecting an average of their sources. For complex and idiotic reasons, there is cheap "old" gas that goes unsold. Kennedy buys it, arranges with a pipeline to transport it, and sells it to utilities at the "blended" price. The profits go to a local program to help poor people pay their natural gas bills.

Kennedy, as part of his "businessman" image, has made a great to-do about favoring "decontrol" of natural gas so that "competition" will lower prices to consumers. He either purposely obscures or doesn't understand the fact that true decontrol would put him out of business, by wiping out the differential between "old" gas and the market rate. Kennedy also favors something utterly contradictory to decontrol called "block billing," which essentially would give some customers cheap old oil and others expensive new oil, instead of charging all of them the blended rate.

There's nothing wrong with Citizens Energy Corporation. In fact, it's helped

continued on page 49

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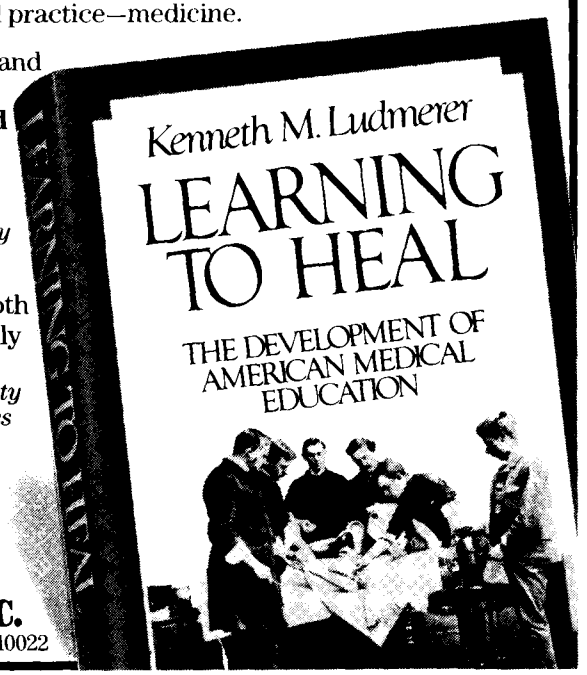

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... MORE HYPE THAN HEAT
Joe Kennedy's funny oil company.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... On council member Messinger, think tanks, &c.

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... A BAD IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME
Gramm-Rudman is a silly way to bring back fiscal sanity—but the only way.
NOTEBOOK
Nobel quack, loophole larceny, &c.

8 **ALEX HEARD** ..... ON THE HILL: THE HELMS WIT
Jesse and the boys swap a few rib-ticklers.

10 **CHARLES LANE** ..... POSTCARD PERU: COKE BASKET OF AMERICA

12 **JOSHUA MURAVCHIK** ..... ARRESTING ARAFAT
We may have evidence to charge him with murder.

14 **JAMES LEDBETTER** ..... CAMPUS DOUBLE AGENT
Our man infiltrates Accuracy in Academia.

16 **RICHARD GAINES & SCOT LEHIGH** ..... THE LITTLEST KENNEDY
Hiding behind his name, Joe II enters politics.

17 **GREGG EASTERBROOK** ..... YORK, YORK, YORK
Heard the joke about the Divad weapons system?

20 **TIMOTHY NOAH** ..... BIRTH OF A NEW IDEA
How a buzzword becomes a household word.

22 **JEFFREY TOOBIN** ..... AFTER INTEGRATION
A new legal approach to equality at school.

24 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: DIFFERENT VERSIONS
Stale *Chorus Line*; fresh *Young Sherlock Holmes*.

28 **ROBERT BRUSTEIN** ..... ON THEATER: RECEIVING AN AWARD
The role of the resident theater movement.

29 **EDWARD ROTHSTEIN** ..... THE QUEST FOR PERFECT SOUND
Hear it and weep. CDs may be all the rage, but real musical revelations still lie in the old LP, as audiophiles of the High End proclaim.

40 **NATHAN GLAZER** ..... THE FIRE THIS TIME
The Price of the Ticket
The Evidence of Things Not Seen
by James Baldwin

44 **PAUL KENNEDY** ..... PLOWSHARES OR SWORDS?
The American Occupation of Japan
by Michael Schaller
U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity
by Edward A. Olsen

47 **JACK BEATTY** ..... CANADA DRY
What's Bred in the Bone by Robertson Davies

48 **HEATHER MCHUGH** ..... POEM *A Cup of Sky, A Foot of Fire*

50 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... SHAMELESS

COVER by Allen Carroll for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 29.

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CORRESPONDENCE

ORTEGA'S MESSINGER?

To the editors:

I was appalled at THE NEW REPUBLIC's description of New York City Council member Ruth Messinger, who attended an invitation-only meeting for Daniel Ortega during the 40th anniversary of the U.N., as one of the "reflexive enthusiasts of revolution" (Notebook, November 18). It strikes me as a McCarthyite characterization.

I have known Ruth Messinger for a good number of years and worked with her in dozens of good causes. She is a valued member of the Democratic Socialists of America, an organization that has opposed repression of the left or the right wherever it occurs.

Ruth Messinger is fundamentally opposed to the shameful American support of the Somoza-led *contras*. But she, as I have, has made it clear to the Sandinistas and everyone else that this does not imply a blanket endorsement of everything done by Managua. She understands that the restrictions on civil liberties adopted several weeks ago by the Sandinistas were, in good measure, prompted by America's attempt to overthrow the regime—but she is disturbed by them too.

I might add that she also told the Sandinistas that, among her criticisms, she was disturbed by their walking out on Shimon Peres's speech at the U.N. But make no mistake: neither Ruth nor I think that Sandinista actions, with which we disagree, justify America's attempt to overthrow the regime.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON
New York, New York

The editors reply:

Democratic Socialists of America may be "opposed to repression of the left or the right." But this is a far cry from evidence that Ruth Messinger has been. Mr. Harrington is uncharacteristically coy. No one said that she gave "a blanket endorsement of everything done by Managua." The question is whether she has been publicly critical of the suppression of basic civil and human rights by the Sandinistas. Harrington says that she "is disturbed" by this. How are we to know? Public personages are counted by what they say publicly. In any case, Messinger is a founder of the U.S. section of the World Peace Council, a propaganda agency run out of, by, and for, Moscow. She was a featured participant at the opening of its New York chapter. As recently as this year, in fact, Messinger co-sponsored a resolution of the City Council "encouraging the participation of young people in the 12th world festival of youth and students." The Moscow Youth Festival was an undertaking of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, a well-known front for the aims of Soviet foreign policy. The U.S. delegation was organized by the Young Communist League. Still, Messinger urged the view that the Moscow fest would "foster peace and friendship." What it did too, among other activities, was to convene a People's Youth Tribunal, addressing itself to the "crimes of the U.S. military-industrial complex and Israeli crimes against the Arab peoples." Will Mr. Harrington find out whether this also disturbs her?

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THINK TANK TALK

To the editors:

Bob Kuttner's article "What's the Big Idea?" (November 18), which gives a general one-and-a-half-fork rating to the best-known Democratic-leaning think tanks, betrayed a disturbing lack of understanding of how and where policy and politics come together.

Such entities, ranging from Brookings to presidential-candidate-sponsored institutes, fall short, Kuttner says, because they fail to think of policy as being connected to politics and thus they wrongly concentrate on details of policy rather than on the themes and values that move voters and win elections. Rather than grubbing around in fine-print examination of economic, national security, environmental, social, and other national policy areas, Kuttner says, they'd be better served to find a rallying theme or slogan, such as the good old Opportunity for All, then fill in with policies and programs that fit.

The fact is, though, that slogans and overarching themes—if they're to have any meaning behind them—don't precede policy and political rethinking.

continued on page 48

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
DECEMBER 30, 1985

A BAD IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

The Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction plan sure makes people sore. It has more detractors than White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan—no small feat. Mayor Henry G. Cisneros of San Antonio says it means the end of "the federal system as we know it." Cisneros's concern is federal aid to cities. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger echoes Cisneros, except that his worry is military spending. The deficit reduction scheme, Weinberger argues, threatens the nation's security. The list goes on and on.

The detractors have a case, but they don't have a credible alternative. Their solution is no solution at all. It is that the president and Congress should give the current budget process one more valiant try. This won't work. Senate Republicans made precisely that last-ditch effort in 1985 and found themselves undercut by President Reagan, House Republicans, and nearly every Democrat in Congress. The budget process, inaugurated with such promise a decade ago, has simply failed. The deficit is skyrocketing, even as Reagan rails hypocritically against federal spending and Congress pretends to have sobered up on budget matters. In this supposed era of budget restraint, the deficit has risen from $78.9 billion in 1981 to $211.9 billion in 1985. The woefully unbalanced budget, among other things, has caused debt service to double to nearly $150 billion a year. A new method of budgetry is required, and Gramm-Rudman is the only live option.

The nightmare of the spending constituencies, from big-city mayors to Weinberger, is that Reagan and Congress will fail to come together on a deficit reduction package. In fiscal year 1987 under Gramm-Rudman, for instance, $56 billion must be cut, dropping the deficit to $144 billion. If Reagan and Congress can't agree, the $56 billion will be achieved in across-the-board cuts, $28 billion from domestic programs, $28 billion from defense. Antipoverty programs and Social Security are protected in this circumstance, but cuts in education, economic development, medical research, etc., will be deep. The cuts in military spending jeopardize major Reagan initiatives—the MX missile, for one—though half the Pentagon budget is protected.

This is the worst of all worlds. But Gramm-Rudman needn't work that way. It's in everybody's interest to reach agreement and avert indiscriminate, across-the-board cuts. And Gramm-Rudman creates enormous pressure on the White House and Congress to do just that. Reagan is desperate to spare the Pentagon savage cuts, and there's a way: a tax increase. To be sure, he doesn't want one. But his military buildup—and perhaps the survival of Star Wars—is more important to him than his campaign pledge not to raise taxes. There are many ways to raise revenues without boosting marginal tax rates: a gasoline tax, taxing more of Social Security benefits, killing the egregious loopholes that survive the tax-reform ax. With Reagan on board, ushering a tax hike through Congress would be a cinch.

As passionately as Reagan wants to save Pentagon spending, Democrats in Congress are eager to protect domestic programs. A tax increase will help some, but it won't spare cuts entirely. So Congress will have to pick and choose. Is preserving the Small Business Administration worth accepting further cuts in Medicare? Must the Economic Development Administration, which Senator William Proxmire says is to waste and abuse what ice and snow are to the North Pole, be kept alive at all costs? Is the Amtrak subsidy, allowing commuters on the Boston-Washington line to travel for a fraction of the real cost, indispensable? Organized constituencies have traditionally kept these questions from being addressed seriously. Gramm-Rudman means they will no longer be brushed aside.

These are exactly the kinds of choices our national leaders have refused to make over the past few years, saddling us with deficits that are a serious threat to our prosperity and security. The most sensible formula for controlling the budget is already under discussion in Congress: a three-way split among domestic cuts, defense cuts, and a tax increase. This offers something for everyone. Reagan relishes meat-cleaver cuts in domestic programs. He won't get that, but programs like SBA, EDA, the Amtrak subsidy, and Urban Development Action Grants ("slush funds for mayors," Governor Bruce Babbitt of Arizona calls them) will be trimmed or eliminated. Congressional liberals favor a brake on defense spending, and that they'll achieve. Reagan will need a tax hike merely to keep mili-

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tary expenditures at the current level. As for the three percent growth in defense spending Reagan envisions, you can kiss it good-bye.

It would be nice to think that Reagan and Congress could make an arrangement on spending and taxes without the prod of Gramm-Rudman. But life isn't like that in Washington. The organized few, who favor one spending program or another, routinely prevail over the unorganized many, who want the deficit reduced. Gramm-Rudman, ridiculous as it is, will change that.

NOTEBOOK

□ CARDIOLOGIST TO THE CZARS: The premise of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which won this year's Nobel Peace Prize, is that doctors, as experts in human health, have some sort of special understanding of the nuclear peril and what to do about it. Accepting this dubious premise, does it not cast some doubt on the nuclear wisdom of Dr. Yevgeni Chazov, co-chairman of the group and personal physician for the Soviet leadership, that he has lost three prominent patients in quick succession—all of whom were claimed to be in perfect health until the moment they dropped? A more serious charge against Dr. Chazov is that he has participated in the official Soviet hounding of a genuine nuclear expert and peace lover, Andrei Sakharov. In obvious fact, Chazov is nothing more than an apparatchik. International Physicians, far from being a product of its Western members' sophistication regarding the nuclear dilemma, is a sign of their naïveté. The Nobel Committee itself compounds naïveté with viciousness. When West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl protested the honoring of Chazov, the committee charmingly replied that the last government leader to challenge their sublime judgment was Adolph Hitler.

□ "THE HOUSE OF LIES" is what someone has called the United Nations. Here is one recent, and typical, example of why. The speaker is Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the political department of the PLO, addressing a meeting called by the Arab League states for other friendly delegations. The subject was Leon Klinghoffer, the man whose bullet-ridden body washed up on shore several days after the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro*—an atrocity, you recall, the PLO earnestly attempted to dissociate itself from. Kaddoumi observed about Klinghoffer, "He's paralyzed, 69 years old, perhaps it might be his wife pushed him over into the sea to have the insurance. Nobody even had the evidence that he was killed." Present and unobjecting were Jaime de Pinies of Spain, the president of the General Assembly, and Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, U.N. secretary general. Pérez de Cuéllar is about to vacate his post, and frantic maneuvers by would-be successors have already commenced. But why would any serious person want a job whose specifications include listening respectfully and without comment to such preposterous falsehoods?

□ TAX-REFORM WATCH: Most Sundays, an investment firm named Lebenthal buys an ad in the *New York Times* business section urging people to avoid paying taxes by investing in Lebenthal's specialty, tax-free municipal bonds. On Sunday, December 1, though, Lebenthal devoted its valuable space to expounding on the evils of the Ways and Means Committee tax-reform bill, which would limit the use of tax-free bonds for nongovernmental purposes. In fact, the committee succumbed to heavy lobbying—by the investment houses among others—and did almost nothing to curb the misuse of municipal bonds. But it did make some municipal bonds subject to the "alternative minimum tax," which would hit very wealthy taxpayers who make excessive use of loopholes. Lebenthal argues that this minor step "taints all Municipal Bonds with uncertainty," and will lead to "additional cost [for] state and local borrowing [that] will come out of everyone's pocket in his or her capacity as a local taxpayer." This is the kind of flimflam we can expect from the business interests affected, however little, by the surprising progress of tax reform. If the people at Lebenthal actually thought the effect of this tax change would be a dramatic increase in municipal bond rates, they would be overjoyed, since their business is selling municipal bonds. In fact, limiting the abusive use of municipal bonds should *reduce* the cost of legitimate local government borrowing by eliminating some of the competition. Here's a rule to keep in mind during the coming debate: the best evidence of who benefits from a loophole being defended in an advertisement isn't what the advertisement says. The best evidence is who's paying for it.

□ PAC UP AND GO HOME:

Senate Skirts a Vote on Limiting PAC Funds in Races for Congress

—*New York Times*, December 4

Senate Endorses Curbing PACs

—*Washington Post*, December 4

ON THE HILL

THE HELMS WIT

"FOR YEARS, movement conservatives have chafed at criticism from people like you who say we 'are never funny.' " The speaker, a standard-issue young conservative—thin hair receding from waxy, protruding forehead, fish-belly skin tone, newsprint-stained fingers, oversize necktie knot, green Robert Hall suit—had me cornered at a party.

"Look, all I said was that, to me, screaming detracts

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from your delivery. Besides, no joke should take 30 minutes. Madalyn Murray O'Hair, Norman Lear, Noam Chomsky, Dan Rather, Phil Donahue, Richard Cohen, the Sandinista leadership, Greenpeace, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State—having all those people in the same joke trying to 'lie their way into the gates of heaven' is just . . . too much."

I know what I'm talking about. Over the years I've sampled quite a bit of New Right humor, and last month I had the opportunity to observe it at full spleen. The Conservative Leadership PAC, a Washington-based group that trains tomorrow's mirthless conservative leaders, sponsored a fund-raising "roast" of Senator Jesse Helms. Not counting the men who, at this gathering, were the "guest liberals"—Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole and Education Secretary William Bennett—the dais contained an ideal sample of movement funnymen: Representative Bob Dornan, former Rumanian ambassador David Funderburk (a leading candidate for John East's Senate seat), the Rev. Pat Robertson, Paul Weyrich of the Committee for a Free Congress, and *Washington Times* columnist John D. Lofton Jr.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Yes, they weren't funny. But why? Theories are easy to come by. Though I haven't read Ellen Goodman's thoughts on this matter, I'm pretty sure she would say: "My daughter asks me, 'Mom, why are they good-naturedly roasting Senator Jesse Helms? His policies are mean-spirited; underlying them is a message of intolerance, not tolerance, of hate, not like, of obduracy, not unobduracy.' " She is right: there is no humor in this.

My theory is simpler: Conservatives are just too cheap to hire pro joke writers.

As the Helms roast illustrated, there is truth in each of these explanations. Ambassador Funderburk, for example, sorely needs a new gagman. I suspect he's now making do with Bible-college graduates. "You know," he said, "the State Department did everything they could to beat Senator Helms in the last election. Finally, before his last debate with Governor Hunt, they took their last shot. Right before airtime, Senator Helms turned to an aide and said in a panicky voice, 'My glasses are fogged up, I can't see anything.' I later read an intelligence report saying that this was just a last-ditch effort from the folks at Foggy Bottom." (Pause.) "To try to defeat Jesse Helms."

The same thing goes for Pat Robertson. You would think a man with a zillion-dollar communications network could do better than: "If Jesse were a grocery product, we would call him 'Heaven Helper.' " And, "Jesse, I have a telegram here from one of your colleagues: 'Congratulations, Jesse. I'd love to join the festivities, but the pro-life movement faces a new challenge tonight. Tip O'Neill is demanding that my amendment include an exemption for the pregnant pause. Signed, Henry Hyde.' "

Representative Dornan, billed as "the Ninja Congressman," won honorable mention for not failing to produce a bad-taste AIDS joke. "People have talked about Jesse's instinctual conservative common sense. They ask him, 'Jesse, what do you do for AIDS?' He comes back quickly like this: 'Saltpeter.' "

Wait, there's more. Like all movement conservatives, Dornan is unable to maintain a funny line of thought for more than 30 seconds before something truly upsetting occurs to him—the State Department, our deviation from the Framers' intent in the First Amendment, whatever. Note Dornan's rising hysteria as his 30-second policy-repression clock runs out. "Then they say, 'Jesse, what do you do for congressmen who constantly want to raise taxes, for senators and congressmen who REFUSE to cut federal spending—there's no END to the energy of these people—what do you DO with these people?' Jesse thought a little longer on that one and said, '*Saltpeter!*' "

How do you follow that? Paul "It-is-more-important-to-make-progress-than-to-make-friends" Weyrich, using a brilliant *Back to the Future* setup, said he had just "returned from 1993," where he had a chance to observe "the first 100 days" of the Jesse Helms administration. "Jesse moved quickly to increase foreign AIDS—that's AIDS, A-I-D-S."

Foreigners and un-Americans of all kinds took a merciless ribbing from this zany fat man. "President Helms's first move in his administration was to go to Moscow—that is, Moscow, Idaho, where he discussed potato prices." Barump. "Jesse had the National Endowment for the Humanities award Dan Rather and the entire CBS news department a grant allowing them to spend four years . . . in Borneo." Barump bump. "President Helms

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awarded ambassadorships to Senators Metzenbaum, Kennedy, Hart, and Cranston—to the Republic of Chad, the Maldives, Ethiopia, and Gambia. This may well screw up relations with those countries, but it's worth it." Barump bump . . . *bump*.

Then came the last roaster, the Rip Taylor of the New Right, John Lofton. Lofton did not get far before memory of the *Post* triggered a lengthy screed: ". . . two of its hate-mongering HIT squad: Richard Cohen, who's sort of an effeminate Mary McGrory, and David Broder, a most venomous viper that frequently bites below the belt. . . . Both of these SLEAZEBALLS in recent months have accused you of being racist, Jesse. So I called IDIOT Broder and IDIOT Cohen . . ." And so on. Still, he had time to take top bad-joke honors: "Jesse, I want to say good things about you, but you make it hard, friend. I've had a peek at your Marcus Garvey Constructive Disengagement Act of 1986. You know, the one where you propose that all the blacks in South Africa be sent, as you put it, *back to Africa*. I mean, they're already *in* Africa."

And to come in second: "And I'm worried, Jesse, about that humorous poem you sent to the mainland Chinese delegation when they arrived here in Washington: 'You'll wonder where the yellow went / When the H-Bomb hits the Orient!"

The roast ended when, in keeping with established tradition, a merciless Senator Helms inflicted revenge that rendered the panel and audience helpless: 45 seconds of jokes and ten minutes of serious tribute to his colleagues, straight from the heart.

ALEX HEARD

Alex Heard's last piece for TNR was "Washington Romance" (November 4).

POSTCARD PERU

COKE BASKET OF AMERICA

Lima

"OH, I'M a businessman. I deal in agricultural supplies," said the tall, jovial man as we sat down to breakfast in a roadside restaurant outside Progreso, Peru. Progreso is one of the biggest drug-trafficking centers in the Upper Huallaga Valley. I had been wondering what my companion—with his Colombian accent, his long gold chain, and his bright green silk shirt—might be doing here. "Oh, I work for a company in Progreso—fertilizers, that sort of thing," he said. "You know," I mused, "I hear they grow a lot of coca around here." "That's what they say," the businessman told me evenly. "But I don't believe it."

Right. The Upper Huallaga, a vast stretch of heavily jungled mountain terrain in Central Peru, is the Kansas of cocaine. It is also the world's biggest center for the production of basic cocaine paste, the raw material from which cocaine is processed. It contains most of the 83,000 hectares, or about 200,000 acres, of Peruvian territory that the U.S. estimates are dedicated to illegal coca bush cultivation. It is home to dozens of backyard factories for extracting the paste from coca leaves, and 57 clandestine landing strips from which Colombian smugglers airlift the paste to processing labs in the Amazon. According to the *Andean Report*, Lima's respected English-language financial monthly, the paste traffic pumps $600 million to $800 million per year into Peru's economy.

Peru's new president, 36-year-old Alan Garcia Perez, says he wants to shut down this lucrative business. He has dismissed more than 100 police officials, and the government has captured and put on trial Reynaldo Rodriguez, allegedly one of the biggest figures in the drug mafia. In August Peruvian commandos carried out two joint U.S.-Colombian-Peruvian "Operation Condor" raids in the Amazon, which captured eight cocaine labs, five light aircraft, 3.5 tons of cocaine paste, and 22 clandestine airstrips.

And now Peru has stepped up the anti-narcotics battle within the Upper Huallaga. On November 13, Dipod, the special anti-drug unit of the Peruvian police that carried out operations Condor I and II, launched "Operation Condor III," the largest drug raid in the valley since 1979. According to Colonel Juan Zarate, the six-week operation has an ambitious agenda: to destroy all of the valley's airstrips, to capture traffickers and paste, and to eradicate paste-making facilities and coca fields. Accompanied by armed observers from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and the State Department, the police are using helicopters rented from the Peruvian air force to swoop in on their targets. The United States is picking up the entire tab. As of early December, the police had captured or destroyed 40 airstrips, wrecked 48 paste-making facilities, seized or destroyed 1,918 pounds of paste, jailed six alleged narcotics traffickers, and seized two small aircrafts.

Impressive as it is, this haul isn't the beginning of the end for the Upper Huallaga drug industry. The Amazon labs and airports taken in the earlier "Condor" raids were relatively isolated outer branches of the coke distribution network. Peruvian officials say a large number of other labs and airports still remain. The Upper Huallaga is a whole social system based on coke. Vice minister Augustin Mantilla, who heads Peru's anti-drug drive, says, "Thousands and thousands of small farmers are participating in growing coca and processing paste." Few of them want to give up their lucrative way of life, and in the current lawless atmosphere of the valley, the anti-drug efforts have often found themselves outgunned, too.

IT'S LITTLE WONDER that the coca business should attract "thousands and thousands." A one-hectare tea producer, by contrast, can expect to *gross* just over $400 per year. But according to the Peruvian agency that buys the small legal coca crop grown in the Upper Huallaga, a

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typical farmer of illegal coca can net about $5,500 per hectare (2.47 acres) per year for his leaves. Profit margins are high because coca yields four or five harvests a year with minimal care or expense.

The profits aren't exactly consumed inconspicuously. In Tingo Maria, the commercial center of the valley, you can shop for stereos from sidewalk vendors, and the appliance stores are filled with Japanese-made TVs and refrigerators. Father Fortunato Legarde, the chief priest in Tingo, reports lavish "narco-weddings" that proceed from his church to receptions at the luxury hotel De Turistas, where guests dance to top-name rock bands from Lima. In Uchiza on one recent Sunday the local church's collection plate came back filled with $100 in U.S. greenbacks.

BEFORE Operation Condor III, the United States and Peru had met with little success in controlling the drug trade. The U.S. State Department has spent $4.4 million on Corah, a coca plant eradication program. Battling rugged terrain and "narco" protection squads that killed 19 of them a year ago, Corah workers have so far torn out 7,700 hectares, but even the program's Peruvian director concedes that coca cultivation has simply been pushed farther back into more inaccessible parts of the jungle. The United States gives another one million dollars a year to the rural mobile patrol unit (UMOPAR). This 300-man police force is hopelessly overmatched by the narcotics mafia it is supposed to be attacking. The force has no helicopters, and only eight FAL (light-automatic) rifles—standard equipment for narcos. It is basically confined to one embattled outpost in the drug town of Progreso, and to areas close to its Tingo Maria headquarters. According to Javier Marius, UMOPAR's American-trained commander, "the primary task" of UMOPAR's men has become protecting Corah's workers from attack.

The most extensive U.S.-funded effort in the valley is the Upper Huallaga Special Project (PEAH), a five-year, $26.5 million effort by the Agency for International Development designed to help coca farmers plant other crops. But one official labels the project a "spit in the ocean." It has devoted much of its money to training programs that only yield results over the long term. The result of failing to follow up enforcement and eradication with a quick, profitable legal alternative has been the creation of what Felipe Paucar, a leader of a 5,000-member coffee and cacao cooperative, calls "a kind of hate directed fundamentally toward the government of the U.S."

In the summer of 1984, that hate helped fuel a drive by *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) guerrillas to add a "second front" in the Upper Huallaga to their base in the remote highland province of Ayacucho. Peruvian military sources in the zone estimate that the *Sendero* ranks, swelled by angry local youths, reached 500 at their peak. The guerrillas struck mainly at the anti-narcotics apparatus, especially PEAH, into whose headquarters they threw dynamite, and UMOPAR, 28 of whose members they killed in a series of ambushes.

On July 28, 1984, then-president Fernando Belaunde Terry declared the Upper Huallaga an "emergency zone," giving the Peruvian armed forces complete political, legal, and military control of the valley. Police and military sources agree that the guerrillas are no longer a significant threat in the valley. However, many find the rapidity of the army's victory suspicious. The army only allows UMOPAR and Corah to operate in a few very small areas. And until Operation Condor III, the army had almost totally denied anti-drug forces the support of their formidable hardware and intelligence.

The military says that it didn't pursue traffickers on its own because the armed forces are constitutionally forbidden from direct involvement in law enforcement. Critics, though, say that the army is protecting the illegal coca industry in exchange for a piece of the action. One bit of circumstantial evidence that supports this theory is an intelligence map at UMOPAR headquarters that shows that several of the army's bases are surrounded by coca fields, paste-making facilities, and landing strips. According to the *Andean Report*, General Julio Carbajai, the military chief of the zone, told farmers in the coca-growing town of Monzon last March: "We guarantee that you will be able to continue with your normal economic activities."

The Garcia administration now recognizes that getting more cooperation from the army, or getting the army out of the valley altogether, is critical. According to Vice Minister Mantilla, the military has yielded to Garcia's demands that the police be given freer rein—and logistical support. On the other hand, the drug lords—whoever they are—wouldn't necessarily have much to fear from an unleashed police force. The original Operation Condor III plan called for UMOPAR to take over the drug smuggler stronghold of Uchiza. But that plan, which had been vigorously urged by the U.S., has been scrapped. More money won't be forthcoming soon (although $3.8 million is included in the State Department's 1986 budget request). Mantilla was recently quoted in the *Washington Post* as accusing the U.S. of withholding drug enforcement aid because it didn't like Garcia's defiant position on the Latin debt crisis—a linkage the U.S. denies.

MEANWHILE, there is still the problem of what to offer the peasants, who form the backbone of the cocaine economy. An official of PEAH rightly notes that the war on coke will ultimately be won by the side that captures the "hearts and minds" of the valley's population. So PEAH is retooling to offer farmers not just technical advice, but roads, schools, and medicine as well. The project has developed a $300,000 pilot village where, protected by an army outpost, 200 peasant families are building a school and cultivating rice. But to really do it right (on a scale rivaling the narco-economy) would cost $300 million over five years, the official estimates—more than ten times the current PEAH budget. And that's assuming ongoing enforcement efforts wouldn't alienate the coca farmers, or that they wouldn't be cowed by the drug lords.

Just nine days after Operation Condor III began, six armed men ambushed three Peruvian Republican Guards

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on patrol near PEAH's research station, killing one and wounding the other two. On December 1, the mayor of one large town in the valley, Aucayacu, was shot to death outside his home by suspected narcos. The Upper Huallaga's heart belongs to coca, and the narcos' minds are set on protecting their domain.

CHARLES LANE

Charles Lane, a former TNR writer, is now based in Lima, Peru.

A warrant for the PLO chief?

ARRESTING ARAFAT

JUST WHEN the Reagan administration thought it had hit upon a relatively painless approach to the problem of international terrorism, it finds itself juggling a hot potato. The new approach consists of treating terrorism as simple criminality and pursuing terrorists with the instruments of law enforcement. The hot potato is the proposal now bouncing around somewhere between the State and Justice departments to seek the arrest of Yasir Arafat.

There is considerable circumstantial evidence that Arafat was complicit in the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro*: he supplies funds to Abul Abbas's Palestine Liberation Front, and he conferred with PLF leaders several times during the weeks that the hijacking was being prepared. But this is not the crime for which the U.S. government is considering trying to arrest him. Instead, the State Department is reexamining the case of the murder of two American diplomats in Khartoum in 1973.

The reexamination has been spurred both by the new interest in using legal instruments against terrorism and by revelations that U.S. intelligence possesses a taped intercept of Arafat personally ordering the Khartoum murders. U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Vernon Walters recently confirmed in an interview with journalist Edwin Black that when he was deputy director of the CIA in 1973 he had been told of the existence of such a tape. Although he had not heard the tape himself (Arabic being one of those languages that the multilingual Walters does *not* speak), he said that the existence of the tape "was common knowledge at the time among all sorts of people in the government."

A warrant for Arafat is not likely to lead to his arrest. It would serve, though, to keep him out of the United States, and thus away from the U.N. In theory, it could also keep him out of countries that have extradition treaties with the United States, although judging from Italy's refusal to hold Abbas—a much smaller fish—it is hard to imagine that many of our allies would arrest Arafat on our behalf. The more important consequences would be symbolic. A warrant would signal the end of the notion that Arafat can be transformed into a genuine peacemaker. And because it would dismay some U.S. allies, it would show that the administration is willing to incur diplomatic costs in the interests of a serious counterterrorist policy.

THE KILLINGS in Khartoum occurred after eight terrorists seized hostages at a reception at the Saudi Arabian Embassy. The eight, who identified themselves as members of "Black September," demanded the release from prison of Sirhan Sirhan, the Baader-Meinhof gang, and a group of Fatah members being held in Jordan. When their demands were not met, the terrorists selected the three Westerners among the hostages—U.S. Ambassador Cleo Noel, Charge d'Affaires George C. Moore, and Belgian diplomat Guy Eid—and methodically machine-gunned them after first allowing them to write farewell notes to their families and then beating them.

A day later, the terrorists surrendered to Sudanese authorities after a lengthy round of transoceanic communications involving, among others, Arafat and the vice president of Sudan. Sudanese President Gaafar Mohammed Nimeiri, who took the operation as a galling affront to Sudanese dignity, went public at once with evidence showing that it had been run out of the Khartoum office of Fatah. The top Fatah official in Khartoum had fled for Libya the morning after the seizure, leaving behind in his desk drawer a written copy of the plans for the operation. His number two led the assault on the embassy.

It also soon emerged in numerous news reports that the command center for the operation was in Beirut, whence were transmitted both the order to kill the three diplomats and the subsequent order to surrender. Indeed, according to the Sudanese government, when the "executions" were not carried out promptly on deadline, a prodding message was transmitted: "What are you waiting for?"

A month later the *Washington Post* reported that Arafat "was in the Black September radio command center in Beirut when the message to execute three Western diplomats . . . was sent out last month, according to western intelligence sources." The *Post* reported that "Arafat's voice was reportedly monitored and recorded." The *Post* said that according to its sources it was unclear whether Arafat himself, or his deputy, Abu Iyad, "gave the order to carry out the executions. . . . But they have reports that Arafat was present in the operations center when the message was sent and that he personally congratulated the guerrillas after the execution. . . ."

The story, which was denied by a spokesman for Arafat, made less impact then than it might today because Arafat had yet to achieve the kind of respectability that he enjoyed after 1974, when the Arab League declared the PLO "the sole legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people and when Arafat made his triumphant appearance at the U.N. General Assembly.

And, in the avalanche of news on the Watergate scandals, the Arafat/Khartoum story was largely forgotten un-

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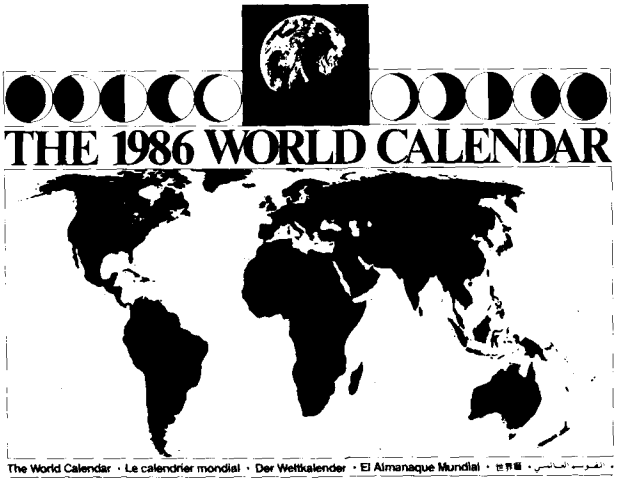

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til this year when the Reagan administration announced its new antiterrorism strategy, a strategy that at first seemed little more than a face-saving gesture. The administration hardly seemed serious when it announced after this summer's TWA hijacking that it had identified the individual perpetrators and was taking a warrant for their arrest. After all, any extradition request to Lebanon would have to be addressed to that nation's justice minister, Nabih Berri, the very man who had negotiated on behalf of the hijackers. But a few months later, when U.S. jets intercepted the four *Achille Lauro* hijackers over the Mediterranean and the U.S. government sought to secure custody from Italy of Abul Abbas, the policy began to look more substantial.

That, and rumors about the existence of the Arafat tape, about which Ambassador Walters subsequently confirmed his secondhand knowledge, inspired Charles Lichenstein, who served as a deputy U.S. representative to the U.N. under Jeane Kirkpatrick, to press the administration for legal action. Lichenstein, now a senior fellow at the Heritage Foundation, says, "Yasir Arafat is a criminal under both international law and U.S. law, and I believe he should be both identified and dealt with as a criminal."

The Justice Department says only that it has the matter "under review." Lichenstein, who has been pressing the matter for weeks, says that though he "remain[s] hopeful" about governmental action, "I'm not holding my breath." The Justice Department will not only evaluate the strength of the legal case against Arafat, it will also solicit the views of the State Department, whose Near East Bureau is sure to oppose action against Arafat. The bureau, which has day-to-day management of the American-sponsored Middle East peace process, has been working on the assumption that Arafat and the PLO must eventually play a part in it.

Lichenstein urges that if the case against Arafat is legally sound, the administration should pursue it "on principle." But he also denies that a conflict exists between the demands of principle and those of diplomacy. He acknowledges that the governments of Jordan and Egypt demand a role for the PLO in the peace process, but he says that those governments need "to come to grips with the fact that Arafat is a terrorist," and that even if Arafat wished to, "he cannot deliver the PLO" on behalf of peace. The PLO, he says, "is not the key to peace, but the greatest obstacle to it."

In a recent interview with *Insight* magazine, Arafat, with customary exaggeration, said about the Israeli raid on his Tunis headquarters, "I can't forget that the American administration, the American president himself declared his blessing to kill me." The question Lichenstein is raising is whether the president should forget that Arafat himself declared his blessing, and more, on the killing of two American diplomats.

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

Joshua Muravchik is a fellow in residence at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

I was a spy for Accuracy in Academia.

CAMPUS DOUBLE AGENT

PROFESSORS TO BE MONITORED FOR LEFTISM. That *Washington Post* headline caught my eye on August 4, 1985. I read that a new group called Accuracy in Academia (AIA) planned to weed out "10,000 known Marxists" on American college campuses. Malcolm Lawrence, president of AIA, vowed to publicize "political bias based on incorrect information" in the classroom. I found it hard to believe that there were that many Marxist professors in American universities, and wondered how AIA would decide which courses to monitor. So the next day I called Lawrence at home, told him that I was a senior at Yale, and asked if they planned to be active on my campus.

"You're a student?" he replied. "Would you be interested in being our Yale contact?" Lawrence didn't ask whether I knew of any instances of Marxism. He didn't ask if I approved of the group. He didn't even ask about my political leanings. Not thinking it would amount to anything, I agreed, and gave him my phone number and school address. Lawrence assured me someone from the group would get in touch. For the next four months, I would be a spy for Accuracy in Academia.

AIA is a spin-off of Accuracy in Media (AIM), an organization created in 1969 to combat the purported liberal bias of the American media. AIM devotes its $1.7 million annual budget to monitoring the press and television for slanted coverage. AIM president Reed Irvine has gained respectability through appearances on ABC's "Nightline" and other television programs. Though best known for its two-hour rebuttal to the PBS series "Vietnam: A Television History" (which was labeled "good propaganda for the communists"), AIM is active on many fronts. For example, noting that polls reveal American women to be more liberal than men, AIM suggests that "one possible explanation . . . is the popularity among women of the Phil Donahue show."

In August AIM announced that it was "going to the source" of the media tilt—leftist academia—and created a new arm to "end the brainwashing." The group has thus far cited a dozen or so "biased" professors. The first student report concerned Dr. Mark Reader, a professor of political science at Arizona State University, who teaches a survey course of political ideologies. AIA's first newsletter, leaked to the press weeks before it was published, charges Reader with teaching only his own "obsessions: . . . anti-nuclear propaganda and fringe economics." An anonymous student also quoted Reader as saying that "the Soviet Union is no threat compared to the United States's imperial aggressions." Reader denied that he had said this, though he claims if he did, he had every right to do so. (AIA claims that "young, impressionable students" are reluctant to criticize a professor who might flunk them, so it promises to keep the identity of its stu-

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dent monitors a secret.) In attempting to substantiate the charge, AIA called Reader 18 times, wrote him a registered letter, and contacted the chair of his department.

The campaign against Reader began before AIA was born. Matthew Scully, former editorials editor of the student paper at Arizona State, wrote a series of columns last year criticizing Reader's class and his "all-consuming dread of nuclear war." Scully, who graduated in 1984, works for AIA.

Two weeks after I spoke to Lawrence, Laszlo "Les" Csorba III, a 1985 graduate of the University of California at Santa Cruz and the executive director of AIA, called me up to explain more about the group. "In just five days, I've got people on 25 campuses," he boasted. "I've been flooded with calls, and there are two stacks of letters on my desk. I bet we'll have 100 or 200 campuses by this fall."

Describing how the campus chapter should work, he said, "We want you to go to classes independently, and report back anything that sounds absurd or blatantly false. . . . Later on we want to hook up with other groups, like the College Republicans and Young Americans for Freedom. Then maybe later you could meet on a regular basis to establish camaraderie."

Worried that he might already have contacted the Yale chapters of these groups to check me out, I replied, "Well, I haven't been too involved with those groups." He told me that was fine, it didn't matter. Then he asked me if I'd encountered leftist professors at Yale.

"Sure, I think a lot of the professors are very liberal."

This confirmed Csorba's findings. "Yeah, . . . I have a list of over 1,000 radical, commie professors I've compiled over the last three years, and Yale seems to be one of the biggies. In fact, I can think of one off the top of my head."

He named Frederic Jameson, whom I knew only as the author of *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*. When I tried to call Jameson's office to get his reaction, I was told that he had left Yale in 1983 and now teaches at Duke in the department of Romance languages. He is on leave this term in China. Weeks later I told Csorba this, and he responded, "Well that was pretty early on. We're not going to get into that business at all, targeting people, giving you the names." He was obviously uncomfortable about my mentioning the list. To admit publicly that AIA was giving students the names of professors to monitor—in effect creating its own reports of bias—compromised whatever legitimacy the group could hope to achieve.

I DECIDED to go to Washington for a closer look. Accuracy in Academia occupies just one room in AIM's offices on K Street downtown. Csorba and I met there on a Saturday afternoon, and Matthew Scully joined us later. With his cowlick haircut, pug-nosed face, salmon Polo shirt, and Topsiders, Csorba looked like a kid in his father's office. A large map of the United States dominated the wall across from Csorba's desk. Black-headed pins marked each campus where AIA had a contact. Csorba smiled proudly as he showed me the pin marking Yale. Still, for all his cartographic precision, he was surprised when I told him later that New Haven is north of New York, and he had no idea where Brown University is.

In private, the directors of AIA do not talk about the dangers of revolutionaries on the campus. "Really, these guys [allegedly leftist professors] are a bunch of dumbbells; they're not that smart," Csorba told me. Scully was disgusted that "30 years after [William F. Buckley's] *God and Man at Yale* there's still the same hacks running around." He doesn't believe that there are many "thorough" Marxists teaching, "just a bunch of old fools who bore everybody with their own theories and only assign books written by people just like them." Csorba and Scully also talk about professors' "paranoid" reactions to AIA.

The professors aren't the only paranoid ones. Csorba confessed he tape-records "all [his] conversations with professors and with journalists." "It's legal in Washington," he reassured me, "You don't even have to tell them you're doing it."

AT ONE POINT, Csorba pulled from his file cabinet what he called his "secret target list" of radical professors. He joked about how he could make money off of it. In the same jovial spirit, Scully remarked, "I think you should take it to Wheeling, West Virginia [where Joe McCarthy launched his anticommunist campaign], to make a speech." As I scanned the list, Csorba's earlier estimate of 1,000 names seemed accurate. Asked how he compiled it, he said he took it from a list of professors who had endorsed a rally opposing U.S. involvement in Central America.

Csorba was enthusiastic about AIA's future, even though only about eight students had reported incidents of bias. He thought perhaps the phone call to Washington was a hindrance. His chief long-term project, he said, is "to put all this on a computer and put out bios on these people." This annotated hit list will include party affiliations, published materials, and reports of alleged bias. But, he added, that is "a couple of years down the line."

Although AIA pledges to keep students' names a secret from professors, it was quite willing to divulge mine for press coverage. Csorba asked me to give my name and phone number to a reporter from the *Hartford Courant* and gave my name to *Time* magazine's Washington bureau. And Csorba had encouraged me to report professors when CBS News wanted to do a story. The Reader case had been made public, he told me, but the network wanted an East Coast incident.

I excused myself and retired to the bathroom, where I scribbled notes of our conversation. When I came back, Scully was typing and Csorba was nowhere in sight. I returned to Csorba's office and remained there for several minutes. I was tempted to take a peek at his "secret target list," but I restrained myself. Instead, I read a framed letter from President Reagan hanging on the wall. I heard some noise in the other room and went to look for Csorba. AIM has a Media Monitor Room, where network news shows are videotaped. There was Les, glued to a TV set. I realized

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that I could steal his files, I could raid Reed Irvine's office, I could do anything; Csorba was watching *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*.

Csorba told me that the "paranoid" professors resisting AIA's calls for "balance" weren't going to force the group out of business. "In a year or two we'll just be a standing presence and people will accept what we're doing as legitimate. We're not going to go away." He's probably right. The group's annual budget is $162,000, covering ten newsletters per year and the small staff. AIA's figurehead president is now John LeBoutillier, the author of an "exposé" of alleged decadence at Harvard who once served a term in Congress. Scully was brought on as national director mainly to write about Reader. Thus he and Csorba alone lead the battle against the army of 10,000 Marxist academicians.

Csorba said that each issue of the newsletter would be sent to 40,000 people. Subtracting staff fees from the budget, there is no way AIA can afford mailing that many newsletters every month. It plans to charge nonstudents $25 a year for the newsletter, but it's doubtful it will get many subscribers. Other backers will have to be found, and no doubt will. There is plenty of conservative foundation money to be had.

Somewhat less secure is AIA's guise of fairness. If AIA is careless enough to allow a mole into its inner sanctum, imagine how it might misrepresent a professor it's already out to persecute for views expressed outside the classroom. As Marx, always the great social commentator, once said: "I wouldn't want to be a part of any club that would have me as a member."

JAMES LEDBETTER

James Ledbetter is a senior at Yale. A longer version of this piece first appeared in the *New Journal*, an undergraduate magazine.

Joe, nobody wants to know ye.

THE LITTLEST KENNEDY

Boston

A COUPLE of weeks before Joseph P. Kennedy II declared for Congress, committing himself to attacking corporate and governmental excess in Washington, he seemed more interested in the ceremonial post of Massachusetts lieutenant governor. Like the Eighth Congressional District seat that House Speaker Tip O'Neill is surrendering next year, the lieutenant governor's job, now vacant, would be absent an incumbent, and thus relatively easy pickings for the first Kennedy of the next generation.

But when Joe, the eldest son of the late Robert F. Kennedy, officially informed Governor Michael Dukakis that he wanted to run with him next year, John Sasso, the governor's chief of staff, made it clear that Dukakis was not enthusiastic about the idea. Kennedy should not have been surprised. The businesslike, low-key Dukakis could easily find himself overwhelmed by the hype and hoopla that attends anything Kennedy. And with Joe on the ticket, a local columnist noted, Dukakis "would have to hire a food taster." Dukakis himself later emphasized that, to be acceptable to him, a candidate for lieutenant governor must be a willing "second banana," a job description that hardly fits anyone with Kennedy blood in his veins.

So, during the Thanksgiving weekend, Joe Kennedy passed the word privately that he in fact had decided to run for Congress. The wisdom of Sasso's concern immediately became obvious. The story that a member of the Third Generation was finally going to run for *something* struck the local press, especially the TV stations, with all the force of the Second Coming.

Kennedy's decision was especially big news to Rupert Murdoch's populistic tabloid, the *Boston Herald*. "HE'S MADE A DECISION," the *Herald* gushed on the front page the day before Kennedy's December 4 announcement. Meanwhile, TV archivists worked overtime hauling file footage to newsrooms. Viewers were bombarded with grainy black-and-white stills of Uncle John in his first run for the same congressional seat, back in '46; and with interviews of old JFK loyalists, who reminisced warmly about the Kennedy legend and the Kennedy legacy. Largely overlooked were the more relevant elements in Joe Kennedy's record: the tragic auto accident years ago that left a friend paralyzed, an embarrassing academic history, and an outspoken contempt for liberalism. In its excitement over the revival of Camelot, the local media didn't think to contrast this Kennedy, who told *Fortune* magazine last July that "the government designs programs to maintain people in poverty," with his family elders. For all intents and purposes, in Boston this autumn a Kennedy is a Kennedy is a Kennedy.

By the time the stations got around to their stand-up man-and-woman-in-the-street stuff, the media had made supporting young Joe a quasi-religious reaffirmation of faith. Shamelessly, Channel 5 even let its political "commentator," Doris Kearns Goodwin, author and wife of longtime Kennedy worshiper and speechwriter Richard Goodwin, apologize for Joe's youthful inexperience with the observation that elective politics ought not to be a system accessible only to seasoned pros.

BUT IF the electronic media were going gaga over the Kennedy candidacy, among the political establishment and the working press his announcement aroused a good deal of resentment. Although the Kennedys are originally from Boston, they are no longer "of" Boston. In 1980, for example, the senior senator was enough of a stranger that the local political leaders—former governor Ed King, the speaker of the House, and the Senate president—all supported Jimmy Carter, not Ted Kennedy.

But Joe Kennedy has worked hard to be "of" Boston—in

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a way. In the six weeks preceding his announcement, local TV stations were running slickly produced PSAs for his Citizens Energy Corporation, which provides low-cost heating oil for low-income residents. Broadcast a total of about 40 times a week on five local stations, the ads promote Joe as a local Robin Hood who would be sure that the poor will not be cold this winter.

For the field of mere mortal candidates who have been slaving in semi-anonymity for months in the Eighth—a district that includes working- and middle-class sections of Boston and Cambridge, as well as the more affluent suburbs of Belmont and Watertown—Kennedy's entrance in the race, on a springboard of free media no less, was cause for particular bitterness.

The working press too resented the way Kennedy seems to have manipulated his supposedly altruistic nonprofit enterprise to further his political ambitions—ambitions he had repeatedly denied having. On the day Kennedy announced, *Herald* columnist Howie Carr gave voice to those frustrations in an especially acerbic column. "Here's a man who understands the crisis of education," wrote Carr. "It's unclear where the hell he got his high-school diploma although he apparently attended Manter Hall, a private school in Harvard Square for rich dummies."

FURTHER frustrating the local press is the prospect of a celebrity candidacy when they had been prepared for a campaign of genuine ideas. The former leading contenders reflect the various philosophical fissures in the Democratic Party. State Senator George Bachrach is running as an unreconstructed McGovernite; State Representative Tom Vallely, a Vietnam War hero turned antiwar activist, as a neoliberal in the mold of his close friend Senator John Kerry; State Representative Bill Galvin, a legislative insider, as a latter-day Tip O'Neill; State Representative Tom Gallagher as a Democratic Socialist in the mold of Michael Harrington. And the race also includes a black Rainbow Coalitionist, a gay attorney from a Brahmin Boston law firm, a woman antinuclear activist, and a grandson of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

When Kennedy finally held his press conference to make it official, the only statement of immediate importance was that he was in. Otherwise, he covered all philosophical bases. Sounding like his father, Kennedy anointed himself as the candidate best suited to promote the interests of the poor and disadvantaged. Sounding like Ralph Nader, he railed against the excesses of corporate America. Sounding like Ronald Reagan, he railed against Washington's "tax and spend, tax and spend" mentality. Perhaps out of recognition of the confusion he was causing, Kennedy asserted, "I don't think there should be any question in anybody's mind that this is *Joe* Kennedy running for office."

The next day, Boston's two dailies showed their differing assessments of that statement. Following a newspaper policy on announcements for Congress, the dominant *Globe* consigned the story to page two of its metro section. But across town at the *Herald*, Kennedy led the paper again. "I'LL TAX THE RICH," the headline screamed.

There's no contradiction here, just the difference between reality and myth.

RICHARD GAINES AND SCOT LEHIGH

Richard Gaines is the editor of the *Boston Phoenix*. Scot Lehigh is a *Phoenix* political reporter.

The Divad joke is on us.

YORK, YORK, YORK

NOW THAT IT no longer matters, there's a rush on to do something about the Divad (a.k.a. Sgt. York) antiaircraft gun scandal. NASA Administrator James Beggs, a former General Dynamics executive, has been indicted along with other G.D. officials on charges involving Sgt. York cost overruns circa 1980. Divad, you may recall, was canceled in August after repeated test failures—the first major weapons system canceled by the Pentagon in nearly 20 years.

Since Divad is deceased, it's now totally safe to attack anything having to do with its tarnished name. In Congress the words "Sgt. York gun" are being repeated like mantras by senators and representatives speechifying on the horrors of procurement waste. But in 1983 and again in 1984 the House refused, by overwhelming margins, to delete Divad funding. The Big Media are now pounding away at the ghost of Divad too, although till the winter of 1984, when a report by the Army inspector general put the dirt on the record officially, the networks and most of the major papers would not touch the story. Caspar Weinberger dragged his feet for three years after his own briefers told him the weapon was a flop. Eventually, have no doubt, Cap will be crowing about how he cleaned up the Sgt. York mess.

The Army's fatal mistake was to release film of the fishy Divad tests in the spring of 1985; Divad's targets were not hit by shells at all, but loaded with explosives and detonated from the ground to give the appearance of hits. This, at last, created something scandalous about the Sgt. York gun that could be shown in pictures and explained in a single sentence. It made for good television.

General Dynamics played a secondary role in the Divad Follies. It built two prototypes for a competitive "shoot-off" held in 1981, then dropped out when Ford Aerospace received the production contract. Allegations against Beggs concern $7.5 million in early development overruns, which the Justice Department says General Dynamics illegally shifted among its many other Pentagon contracts. Whenever weapons competitions come up, contractors make lofty noises about their fearless free-market spirit,

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their risk-taking excellence, etc. Then the losing risk-takers expect a bailout from the taxpayers. Sadly for General Dynamics, the company couldn't even recover some of its Divad investment by declaring a business loss, since it hadn't paid any federal taxes since 1972.

If the accusations against Beggs are true, then he did something deceitful, dishonorable, and no different than what other defense contractors do. Rockwell International recently acknowledged submitting phony time cards. General Electric was caught with $800,000 worth of false billings. Other contractors have been similarly discovered with that wide grin saying, "Hey, I can explain everything."

THE SCANDAL HERE is not what Beggs may have done, but the fact that if he had only filled out the forms a little more carefully, everything would be okey-dokey. What difference does it make under which accounts costs are billed? As TNR readers are aware, the whole process by which defense contractors are paid is preposterous, starting with the concept of "overhead." Pentagon spokesmen protest that the $7,000 coffeepots aren't as nutty as they sound because $7,000 does not represent a price per se, but rather an accountant's way of apportioning contractor overhead per item delivered.

Hold on. When you buy a Mr. Coffee, does the manufacturer present you with a 50-page analysis of adjusted out-year overhead? You are presented with a single figure, a price, and either you pay or you don't. Bargaining overhead, entertainment expenses, and similar details—rather than simply offering a fixed price per weapon delivered—is a system guaranteed to render procurement inefficient and shot through with fraud, if only because the contractors grind out invoices much faster than inspectors general can analyze them. What does it say about the discipline in defense spending that the contract supervisors of the other programs to which G.D. allegedly switched Divad cost overruns took five years to notice a bogus $7.5 million?

Also guaranteed to make Pentagon spending balloon is the presumption that executives at defense contractors should live regal lives, as though they had earned their money fair and square. Last winter G.D.'s chairman, David Lewis, admitted he had billed the government $105,000 for private jets for weekend trips to his family farm. When executives in true private enterprise award themselves dazzling salaries and perks, it's nobody's business but the shareholders'. Defense contractors are another matter. General Dynamics received about seven billion dollars of eight billion dollars in revenues last year from the government, making it as much a "private" concern as the post office.

There's no market discipline on most defense contracts. Costs go up year after year, though in private manufacturing the longer a product is made the less it usually costs as companies benefit from the learning curve. The notable exception is "split source" contracts, which simulate the market by having more than one defense contractor build exactly the same item. In such contracts costs may well decline or quality improve—as in the case of the Sidewinder missile and the latest Air Force engine. When the Northrop F-20, a privately developed fighter, began mounting a serious challenge to G.D.'s monopoly on Air Force F-16s, the company suddenly discovered it could offer a version of the plane for several million dollars less.

At present the only "check" facing most defense contracts is the toothless threat of suspension from government business. G.D. spent the first half of 1985 suspended over Lewis's personal mileage program and other indiscretions, but later got nearly all its business back. Now it's suspended again. The fact that its stock price fell just $1.75 per share from $68 following the announcement shows how seriously investors take this finger-wagging.

By the way, if you're keeping score, General Dynamics now leads the pack of the 45 of 100 largest defense contractors under federal investigation. Besides its two suspensions this year, it has been fined $676,283 for politely bribing Hyman Rickover; Lewis decided to resign after the Pentagon inspector general recommended he be debarred; two top former G.D. executives are living in exile to avoid federal kickback charges; G.D. executive George Sawyer, recently an assistant secretary of the Navy, was discovered talking to the company about a big-bucks job even while supervising its contracts; not long ago G.D. retained one of Sawyer's predecessors, Navy assistant secretary Ed Hidalgo, shortly after he resigned from making money judgments about G.D. work; and a member of the G.D. board, Lester Crown, may lose his security clearance over his involvement in a bribery of Illinois state legislators. But really folks, the pride is back.

IN ANOTHER CASE of the real scandal being worse than the official scandal, Weinberger claims the reason he canceled Divad is that it wasn't high-tech enough. New super-helicopters, he said, would hover just outside its range, launching new super-missiles. This rationale was faithfully endorsed in many editorials and by many congressmen. In fact the new super-missiles have worked only under ideal conditions, and several new super-helicopters of the type to which Weinberger was referring were shot down in Grenada by Cuban construction workers firing World War II-style guns.

Nearly every major military in the world, including the Red Army and our NATO allies, is fielding relatively cheap, visually aimed rapid cannons for battlefield anti-aircraft fire. Pilots say it is the proliferation of these weapons they fear most. Will Divad be replaced with such sensible, cost-effective arms? And now that Pentagon-bashing is in fashion, will other overpriced underachievers be subjected to meaningful improvement—or will institutional Washington be content to congratulate itself for finally admitting the obvious, several years and $1.8 billion too late, about a single system? Among budding Divads of the late 1980s, there's the Amraam missile, the Lantirn navigation device, the Assault Breaker anti-armor system, the "new" C-5 cargo plane, and the Aegis naval automated antiaircraft system, a gingerly tested floating wonder-weapon that might well be the Admiral York.

One of the few people in Washington who can hold his

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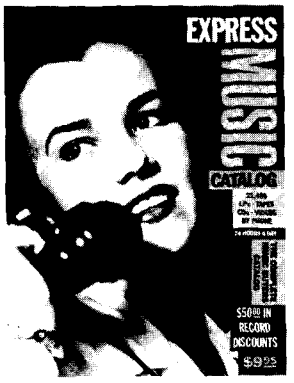

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head up high over the Divad affair is Representative Denny Smith of Oregon, who led the fight to have the gun replaced with something that works, enduring both derision from his colleagues who put pork barrel above national security and accusations from the Army that he was a traitor. Smith, a conservative Republican and former Air Force fighter pilot who flew 180 missions in Vietnam, has considerable personal experience with the gap between the kind of theoretical weapon performance claims that look great on paper and what soldiers really need in combat—which is more than can be said for anyone in Weinberger's inner circle. Smith is now conducting thankless struggles against other dubious entrenched spending programs like Aegis. A better choice for secretary of defense in 1988—regardless of who wins—is hard to imagine.

GREGG EASTERBROOK

Gregg Easterbrook, a national correspondent for the *Atlantic*, broke the Divad story in October 1982.

America's newest backbone.

BIRTH OF A NEW IDEA

IN THE SUMMER of 1970, two years after the violent confrontation between police and antiwar demonstrators at the Democratic National Convention, the city of Chicago made amends to the younger generation. A Sly and the Family Stone concert was scheduled in Grant Park. On a muggy evening in August, a large crowd gathered in the park, and waited. And waited. Finally, it was announced that Sly had been delayed. The crowd booed. Bottles began to fly. Some people spilled out onto Michigan Avenue and knocked out a few store windows. In Chicago the night was remembered as The Great Rock 'n' Roll Riot.

Among those present that night was Ralph Whitehead, a reporter for *Chicago Today*, a short-lived afternoon tabloid put out by the *Tribune*. Whitehead had been writing about younger, disaffected blue-collar workers. He saw a "generational antagonism" between older, more complacent blue-collar workers and those closer to his own age, who had sat out the protest movements of the 1960s but nevertheless seemed to be rebelling too—not against racial segregation or the Vietnam War, but against "industrial discipline."

Standing in Grant Park, Whitehead noticed something curious. One of the features of the upper-middle-class counterculture had been a breaking down of the familiar teenage types. Before, Whitehead noted, there had been four basic categories: jocks, greasers, preppies, and—starting in the mid-sixties—longhairs. But as the antiwar and various other movements wore on, the four tribes had begun to merge. Now the same thing seemed to be happening to the blue-collar crowd that had turned out for the concert. It was impossible to tell the jocks from the longhairs, the greasers from the "doopers" (the Chicago term for preppies, an abbreviation of "Dear Old Oak Parker"). The counterculture had finally trickled down to the working class.

Fifteen years later, Whitehead, now a professor of public policy at the University of Massachusetts, has developed this observation into a theory about the electorate. With the decline of the manufacturing sector and the rise of what Daniel Yankelovich calls a "new breed" of worker who embraces sixties-type values, there has risen what Whitehead calls the "new-collar class." New collars are to the middle class what yuppies are to the upper-middle class. In its "year of the yuppie" cover story last year, *Newsweek* placed yuppies' annual salary at $40,000 and above. New collars earn from $20,000 to $40,000. But what new collars lose in individual wealth when compared to yuppies, they gain back in numbers. Even though the point of the story seemed to be that yuppies were the backbone of America, *Newsweek* could find only four million of them (and those it did find came off as narcissistic snobs). New collars, on the other hand, number 25 million—15 percent of the adult population.

With yuppie fever rapidly becoming passé, Whitehead and others are poised to promote the new-collar phenomenon. He has written about them in a widely read article for the *Boston Globe Magazine* and has spoken before the new Democratic Policy Commission on the subject. In September *U.S. News & World Report* ran a cover story called "The Emerging Power of the New Collar Class."

The new-collar label is one of the "new ideas" that have been germinating in Democratic circles since the humiliating defeat of Walter Mondale. But unlike many of these new ideas, "new collar" tells us nothing about what the Democrats should stand for, or even, more narrowly, what policies they should favor. Nevertheless, "new collar" has stirred much excitement. "If we can start moving those voters into the Democratic column, we're back in the saddle," Democratic strategist Joe Trippi told *U.S. News*. Democrats aren't the only ones thinking about this group—Richard Darman, deputy treasury secretary, calls them "Rinso-blue collars"—but as the New Deal coalition crumbles, the Democrats are desperate to claim new constituencies for their own. The genesis of "new collar" is worth exploring as an example of how, in seeking to break away from special-interest politics, the Democrats remain hobbled by a caucus mentality.

"UNDERSTANDING politics is half art and half science," says Frank O'Brien, director of the Democratic National Committee's direct mail division. "Whitehead's a consummate artist." He certainly isn't—and doesn't pretend to be—rigorously quantitative in his observations. Instead, he has shaped his view of new collars from what he has seen. After working as a journalist in

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Chicago, Whitehead moved to Amherst to teach journalism at the University of Massachusetts. In New England he was able to observe an economic environment where traditional manufacturing was in even further decline than it was in the Midwest—and where the service and high-tech sectors were booming. In 1979 he moved out to Wisconsin to work as a reporter and anchorman for an ABC-affiliated TV station whose target audience was blue-collar families. Whitehead did stories that he now says amounted to ethnographic studies of blue-collar life.

He also read Daniel Yankelovich's 1979 essay "Work, Values and the New Breed." Yankelovich noted a rising ethic of self-fulfillment in the workplace. As distinct from an earlier, more conformist era, Yankelovich wrote, workers were now seeking to express their individualism on the job. "Some people care mainly about money. Some would rather be compensated by more leisure. Others seek status opportunities. Still others derive their satisfaction from the inherent challenge of work itself." Only a few "still place the well-being of the organization or the society ahead of purely personal goals, and future rewards ahead of present ones." Yankelovich cited several reasons for the change in values, among them the sexual revolution, the women's movement, the dying off of the Depression-era work force, a faltering economy, and "a growing disillusionment with the ability of our institutions to deliver the goods."

Sometime in 1980, Whitehead got a call from an editor at the *Wall Street Journal* who was looking for a story from the middle of the country. Whitehead told him about what he'd seen, and about the Yankelovich essay, and proposed a story on the newest generation of blue-collar workers, who weren't blue-collar workers at all, but . . . how about green collars, in homage to Charles Reich's *The Greening of America*? The *Journal* editor was enthusiastic about the idea, but thought the Reich allusion was too flaky. Whitehead then consulted a labor-organizer friend, who suggested "Qiana collar," after the fabric that disco shirts were made from. But nobody knew what Qiana was, and disco was on the way out. Whitehead finally settled on "new collar." By this time, however, he was preparing to move back to Amherst, where he'd been offered his present job of professor of public policy, so the *Journal* never got the story.

DURING the next four years, two elections occurred in Massachusetts that made Whitehead wonder about the political implications of his idea. The first was Michael Dukakis's 1982 comeback victory over Ed King, who had knocked Dukakis out of the governor's office in the Democratic primary of 1978. The conventional wisdom was that Dukakis won back the blue-collar vote from King. But King actually received more primary votes in 1982, when he lost, than in 1978, when he won. Whitehead's explanation was that Dukakis had expanded the electorate to new-collar sons and daughters of King supporters.

The second election that interested Whitehead was the 1984 victory of John Kerry, liberal Democrat, over Ray Shamie, a Reaganite Republican, in the race for the Senate seat vacated by Paul Tsongas. Reagan won Massachusetts, but Shamie didn't ride his coattails. Instead, the winner was a former head of Vietnam Veterans Against the War who had once thrown his medals over the White House fence. (Years later, Kerry revealed that they'd been someone else's medals, but his leftist image remained.) Kerry had tailored his pitch to a group that his pollster, Thomas Kiley, described as "independent baby boomers who aren't yuppies." Was Kerry a new-collar candidate?

Whitehead interested Richard Dennis, the Chicago commodities trader who bankrolls the Roosevelt Center, in the new-collar idea, and Dennis gave him some money for research. Whitehead published his findings in the *Globe* in April. According to Whitehead, the article quickly became "a Xerox best seller on the Democratic Capitol Hill grapevine." Whitehead was then invited to speak before the Democratic Policy Commission.

The *Globe* article focused on Massachusetts, and the speech before the Democratic Policy Commission applied the idea to the national electorate, but the essence of both was the same. Whitehead started with the now-familiar idea of America as a postindustrial society. Among the typical new-collar jobs he cited in the *Globe* were loan officer, nurse, clerk, taxi driver, keypuncher, auditor, driver, administrative assistant, shopkeeper, dispatcher, salesperson, house painter, telemarketing specialist, fast-food manager, insurance agent, customer-service representative, teacher, supervisor, and beautician. "They are to the eighties and nineties what the blue collars were to the forties and fifties and sixties," he told the Democratic Policy Commission. There is some degree of hype in this obituary for manufacturing and the blue-collar voter. True, the manufacturing sector is in decline, but according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it still employs 19.4 million people—only five or six million fewer than the new collars.

WHAT DO new collars want? "New collars are likely to share the liberal views of yuppies on such social issues as abortion, women's rights, and school prayer," Whitehead wrote in the *Globe*. "They tend to share the tax-revolt sentiments of the blue collars. On defense, they split the difference: While YUPs are critical of Reagan's first-term military buildup and the blues generally favor it, the new collars accept it only halfheartedly and join the call for a nuclear freeze." This adds up to a rather murky social vision. "The new collars . . . hold a middle ground in their view of social change. They aren't as strongly shaped as the blue collars by the communal ties of religion and ethnicity, but they do show respect for what they see as the wisdom of the past. . . ."

This year a small new-collar cottage industry came into being. Whitehead has been traveling to meetings and conferences around the country promoting the new-collar idea. And with funding from the University of Massachusetts and Richard Dennis, he is collecting information about the new-collar workplace. The Democrats have incorporated the new-collar idea into their focus group research; Frank O'Brien of the DNC says, "You find a lot of

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confirmation of Whitehead's concepts." Whitehead sees more "new-collar" races on the horizon—for example, Representative Bob Edgar's anticipated bid for the Senate in Pennsylvania in 1986.

What makes new collars important, Whitehead says, is that they're political independents. He denies that he wants to raise new-collar consciousness with a new-collar caucus, a new-collar PAC, and a new-collar constituency clamoring to make Barcaloungers tax deductible. The real value of new collars, he told me, is as a "broad, popular image of the electorate." But why must that bright vision be arrived at by using the hack vocabulary of special-interest politics? "New collar" can't help sounding like a special-interest group, even if it really isn't one. It's hard to see how Whitehead's vision of community can be attained when the words we use to invoke it reinforce habits of thought that have undermined community in the past.

The sad fact is that you can stir more excitement in Washington these days by inventing new categories of voters than you can by talking concretely about how to achieve a just and prosperous society. (Whitehead spoke enviously to me of Gary Lawrence, a Republican pollster who's apparently come up with 27 different kinds of female voters.) At a time when the Democrats should be trying to establish the themes and policies that will win over a new generation of voters, they are busily poking and prodding at the electorate and giving it new names. Early sightings have already been made of the next new category, baby boomers who earn less than $10,000. The Lempert Report, a marketing newsletter, has rather heartlessly nicknamed them "yuffies" (for "young urban failures"). And guess what? "They are a major segment of the larger Baby Boomer universe that everyone is going out of their way to reach." Where Madison Avenue goes, the political consultants will likely follow.

TIMOTHY NOAH

Timothy Noah is a contributing editor of the *Washington Monthly*.

A new approach to equality at school.

AFTER INTEGRATION

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, spends $4,954 per year to educate each child in its public schools. Down the road—and down the social ladder—Patterson spends $2,674 per child. It is a grim but familiar picture. But comparisons like this one may provide the catalyst for a much-needed rejuvenation of the civil rights movement. A key organization has launched a new legal strategy, based on savvy politics as much as good lawyering, to help rebuild the fragmented coalition for racial equality. Crucial to the effort is a recognition that an exclusive focus has not always improved the lives of the black people it purported to serve.

Victories in the courts heralded the glory days of the civil rights movement, and the group responsible for most of those triumphs was the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.—known in the trade as the Inc. Fund. The Fund's historic victory in *Brown v. Board of Education*, when the Supreme Court outlawed official segregation in public schools, highlighted its unparalleled record of success under Chief Justice Earl Warren. Under Warren Burger's more conservative court, the Fund still maintains a respectable batting average, advocating a less popular agenda that has included school busing and job quotas. Recent years, however, have seen the Fund suffer some of the same maladies that have troubled the civil rights movement as a whole—diminished white support, internecine squabbles, and a more hostile political environment.

So the Fund has reexamined its overall strategy, and in a new report outlining its plans for the rest of the century, selected a new and more promising goal. Forty years ago the Fund took aim at the case of *Plessey v. Ferguson* with its doctrine of "separate but equal" in public education. Now it has targeted another Supreme Court case for ultimate reversal: the 1973 decision of *San Antonio v. Rodriguez*. Like most states, Texas funds public schools primarily through local property taxes. In Texas, as elsewhere, rich school districts can and do spend more money on education. They can do this and have lower tax rates at the same time because they draw from a wealthier tax base. They also have fewer competing demands on their local budgets. Civil rights advocates challenged the Texas system; they lost by a five-to-four vote. The Court held that as long as a state provided some minimal level of education to all children, it did not violate the Constitution if some school districts had more money and better programs than others. In other words, said the Court, the Patterson pupils are not now being denied the 14th Amendment's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws."

The strategy for reversal of this decision is straightforward. It is settled law that once a state gives a right to its citizens, the right must be available to all on equal terms. For example, a state cannot dilute the right to vote by, say, putting more people in some of its State Senate districts than others. The votes of the people who lived in the larger districts would carry less weight than the votes of those who lived in the smaller districts. By analogy—tortured, perhaps—the Fund would argue that because the right to public education is as fundamental as the right to vote, a state cannot allocate more resources to the education of some of its children than to others. The first question for the Fund, then, is to convince courts that education qualifies as a right.

AND THAT QUESTION—that phrasing of the issue—is what makes the Fund's program powerful politics. As its long-range planning report puts it, "the national

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drive for excellence in public schools" has created a "major new opportunity" for civil rights advocates. The new strategy puts the Fund in the thick of that movement. Instead of making blacks look like special pleaders or "special interests," the drive to overturn *Rodriguez* turns the Fund into advocates for educational equality—and quality—for all.

Just as important, the new strategy appears to mark a shift away from the goal that has characterized nearly all of the Fund's activity since its inception: integration. Julius Chambers, director-counsel of the Fund, asserts that the new drive marks "an additional emphasis," not a departure from the goal of desegregation. "Integrated schools remain the ultimate objective," he says. But Chambers acknowledges that because many public school systems are now almost all black, and the Supreme Court has all but ruled out city-suburb busing, integration is simply impossible. His task is to protect the black children who remain in the schools.

Chambers's sentiments reflect the views of some in the civil rights movement who have long questioned the goal of integration for integration's sake. Derrick Bell, former dean of the University of Oregon law school and a former Inc. Fund lawyer, says, "For too long, our focus was only on the color separation and we assumed that all of the other things would fall into place. There was no standard for educational attainment." As Chambers points out, "Just mixing students in schools doesn't mean you have quality education." Theodore Shaw, a lawyer for the Fund, observes, "At least in some of the old, segregated schools, there was a different kind of teacher, the black Ph.D.s who couldn't work in the white system, who instilled a sense of pride and achievement in the kids. Today black students are suffering as much if not more than the students were under the de jure system before *Brown*. These urban systems are now separate and unequal."

A CASE now under way in Richmond, Virginia, illustrates the potential of the new strategy to improve education and to broaden the Fund's political base. The local school board's "massive resistance" to desegregation in the 1960s led to the imposition of court-ordered busing in Richmond in 1971; that, in turn, led to almost total white flight from the public schools. As it has in several other cities, the Fund now claims that Richmond's inadequate facilities and programs are all a vestige of the dual system Virginia maintained for so long. But the remedy sought is not integration. There are not enough whites. "If you do enhance the school system as a whole," says Napoleon Williams, the Fund lawyer on the case, "you help the kids there and this will be an enticement for white kids eventually to return to the schools." So the Fund has joined forces with the Richmond school board to press for a new infusion of state aid—for reduced class size, summer school programs, and diagnostic counseling—to compensate the remaining students for the state's abandonment of them. The case does not directly attack the holding of *Rodriguez*, but chips away at its edges, a typical tactic in a long-term litigation strategy.

The school district funding issue emerged from the more general priority of the Inc. Fund's report: the "urgent plight of underclass blacks must shape the nation's civil rights agenda for the rest of the decade." John Boger, a Fund staffer who helped prepare the report, says, "What we got when we talked to people around the country was almost a unanimous sense that the underclass was the key issue we had to address." Chambers notes that the underclass has benefited least from the Fund's past legal triumphs—in school admissions, employment discrimination, and housing. "You can't buy a house—or sit at a lunch counter—" Chambers says, "if you don't have any money."

Of course, any legal strategy to help these people runs directly into the reality of an increasingly conservative federal judiciary, one ill-disposed to use the courts to help the poor. "That's a fact we have to weigh," says Chambers. But the picture may not be as stark as it initially appears. For starters, the Burger Court has softened its hard line from *Rodriguez*. In a 1982 case, for example, the Court forbade Texas from excluding the children of illegal aliens from its public schools. The Court conceded that public education was not a "right," but said "neither is it merely some governmental 'benefit' indistinguishable from other forms of social welfare legislation." The Court warned that "we cannot ignore the significant social costs borne by our Nation when select groups are denied the means to absorb the values and skills upon which our social order rests." Chambers says the right cases, with dramatic disparities between rich and poor, have convinced courts to order some leveling of resources. More important, the Fund has found increasing success in several key state courts, whose reputations as legal backwaters have been transformed by the appointments of progressive governors. In addition, almost every state constitution—unlike the U.S. Constitution—formally guarantees the right to public education. These clauses have strengthened the hands of civil rights advocates in several school funding cases, and the California, Wyoming, Connecticut, West Virginia, and New Jersey courts have already ordered some equalization of funding for school districts.

So the picture for the Inc. Fund does not look nearly as forbidding as it did when its first director-counsel, a young Baltimore lawyer named Thurgood Marshall, began trying school desegregation cases about 40 years ago. Chambers faces little of the raw, open racism that Marshall encountered, but he does confront widespread frustration and exhaustion with the cause of civil rights. "We stand for what we have always stood for," says Chambers, recognizing still that the movement—no less than the nation—must grow with the times.

JEFFREY TOOBIN

Jeffrey Toobin is an editor of the *Harvard Law Review*.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Different Versions

John Bloom is becoming one of the shrewdest editors around. (Claire Bloom's brother, incidentally.) His work on *Gandhi* was, after Ben Kingsley's fine performance, a chief safeguard against didactic plod. Now, working with the same director, Richard Attenborough, Bloom supplies the fluency of motion, the pace, the emphases of angle that

A Chorus Line
(Columbia)

Young Sherlock Holmes
(Paramount)

are the liveliest cinematic aspects of *A Chorus Line*. His editing completes the effect of the dancing: smart competence.

Almost equally impressive is the sound editing of Jonathan Bates. From the start, the chorus call on the stage of a big Broadway theater, everything we hear is crisp: the commands of the choreographer's assistant, the taps, the piano, the suggestions of size in the empty theater. Then, when the camera goes down the line of the first group of selectees, we hear their unspoken thoughts nicely "placed" in a sort of small echo chamber that suspends them between the realistic and the ghostly. The sound throughout is acutely balanced, employs aural planes with almost geographic clarity. For instance, when Cassie (Alyson Reed) sings "What I Did for Love," she climbs a spiral iron staircase in the foreground while, behind and below her, a group of dancers is rehearsing to a different tune. Bates keeps the background music just sufficiently out of hearing so that it doesn't mar the featured song, yet not so far as to put Cassie in fake solitude. Neat.

Are there other reasons to see *A Chorus Line*? Not a great many. Every dancer, as far as I could see, is well up to the professional mark—not least Terrence Mann, the choreographer's assistant. This underscores the grim fact that the best-trained people on Broadway are the ones for whom there are fewest chances, the dancers. (The training of dancers in this country is so far ahead of actors' training that dancers—as some have told me—are surprised by the lack of technique in actors at auditions.) These dancers in *A Chorus Line* give pleasure.

But it's pleasure in the abstract, not as part of a film. The point of the original *Chorus Line* has been muddied. To explain, here's a bit of history, generally forgotten. The show began in 1975 out of Michael Bennett's discontent. This director-choreographer was nettled by Broadway conditions so he asked Joseph Papp for working space downtown at the Public Theater. Papp responded generously. Then *A Chorus Line* (to quote my TNR review, June 21, 1975)

> was evolved through months of rehearsal. Bennett has said that the entire cast . . . was engaged before the show was written. The book, the songs, and the dances were worked out as they went along, from materials that came out of rehearsals, including the lives of all the participants. This is clearly the appropriation by Broadway musical people of a method that has been developed, not by Off Broadway but by Off Off Broadway—in "matrix" groups, such as Joseph Chaikin's now disbanded Open Theater. . . . In fact, one device near the beginning of *A Chorus Line*—when a dance ends with the line of dancers holding up their photographs in front of their faces—is strongly reminiscent of a similar device in the Open Theater's *Mutation Show* (1973). In further fact, this show's overall method, winnowing out the performers' autobiographies to juxtapose them against what they are now, is also reminiscent of *The Mutation Show*.

(An irony, possibly one of the most risible in the history of the theater: the show that started as a flight from Broadway was subsequently moved up to Broadway and is now the longest-running production in Broadway history. As of November 24, 4,228 performances. Only computers can tabulate the number of performances by other companies here and abroad.)

Attenborough and the film producers have completely changed the locus of the work. Of course the Broadway production, as well as the many other productions, has long since lost any direct relation to the lives of its cast, but the show in the theater still *seems* to have a basis of docudrama, fiction derived from the facts of the participants' lives and the conditions in which they work. But only some fragments of "autobiography" are retained in the film, the photographs are rendered unimportant, and the whole event has been converted into a backdrop for the reunion of the choreographer, Zach, with his ex-lover, Cassie. Flashbacks of

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Fool for Love. Sam Shepard's imperfect but crackling play has been distended by his screenplay, then stuffed with Robert Altman's arty direction; but some of the crackle is left, especially in Shepard's own performance and that of Kim Basinger as the half sister who returns his crazy love. (Reviewed 12/23/85)

Macaroni. Marcello Mastroianni's freewheeling Neapolitan, aided by Jack Lemmon's uptight American, gives some fun to this silly plot about two wartime pals who reunite in Naples 40 years later. (11/18/85)

Shoah. This nine-and-a-half-hour documentary, whose title means "holocaust" in Hebrew, is both a unique film and a gigantic historical monument. Claude Lanzmann, the Frenchman who made it, shot 350 hours of film in 14 countries, interviewing witnesses of the Final Solution. *(Every frame was photographed after 1976: no archival footage.)* Survivors of the death camps, "innocent" bystanders who lived near the camps, Germans who aided in the extermination, along with others, create, with their own words, a work that belongs in every civilized human being's experience. (10/28/85)

SK

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their love life are inserted, as are extra backstage scenes. The theater production, though drenched in the theater's perennial self-absorption, attempted (attempts) to make a work out of the theater's workings; the film is one more backstage musical focused on one more backstage romance. Generally affecting sentiment has been transformed into sentimentality. This change to a "plotty" show is all the worse because the plot isn't much.

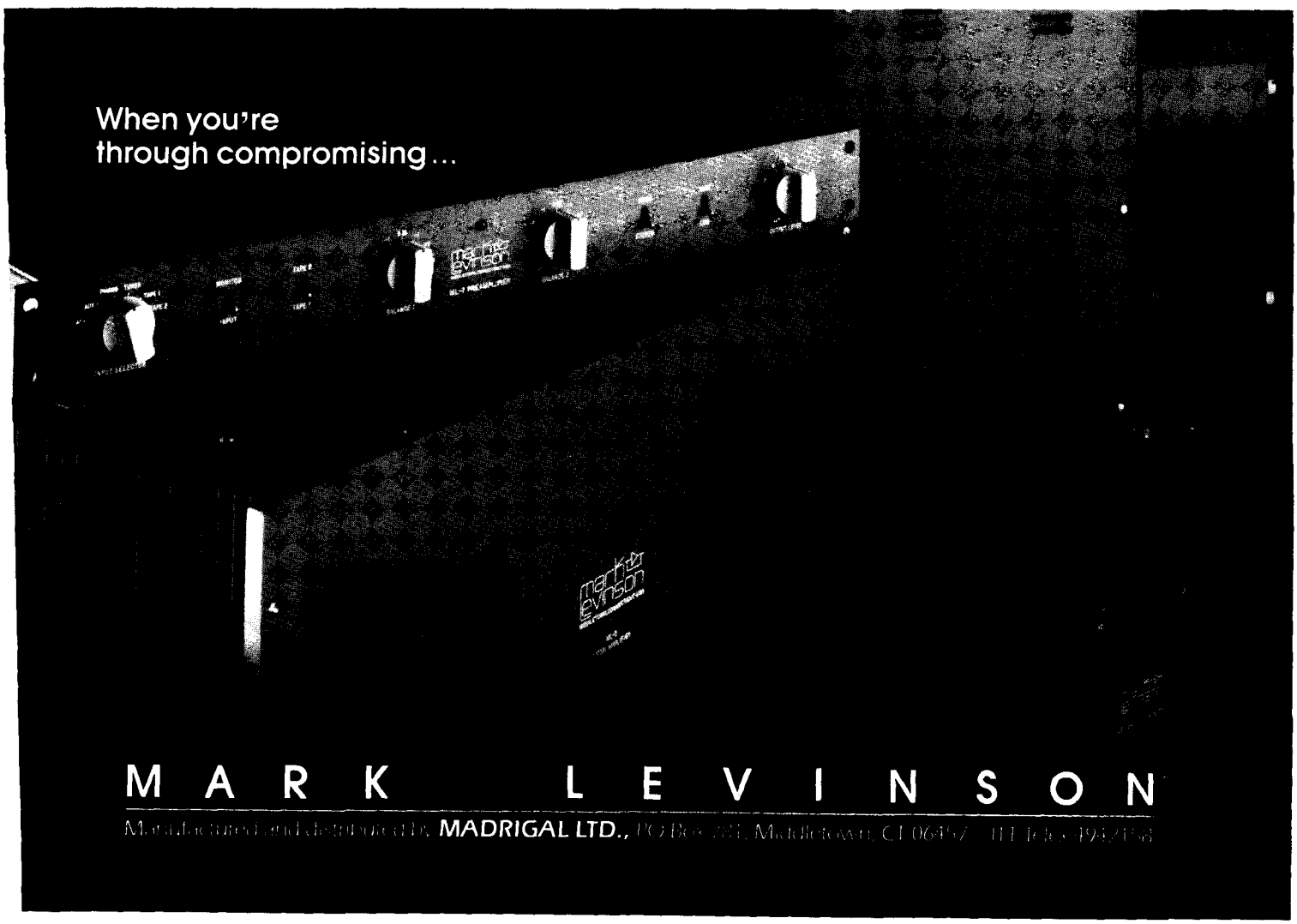
Attenborough has apparently studied some good film musicals and remembers many of the best camera moves from them. Every role is well enough cast. Michael Douglas as Zach seems at first to be taking his job somewhat overseriously—more weightily burdened than Reagan and Gorbachev combined—until one remembers that this is exactly how people in Zach's job see themselves. But the picture is flat. Those few remaining earth creatures who have not seen the show in one language or another on one continent or another will wonder what all the fuss was about.

Young Sherlock Holmes has a family resemblance to *Back to the Future*: although it was written and directed by others, it's a Steven Spielberg production and bears his marks. The screenwriter was Chris Columbus, who is a Spielberg familiar; the director was Barry Levinson, who is not. But when you see a picture whose climax depends on the hero and friend flying—either on vehicles that don't usually fly or that are anachronistic—and when they are flying to the rescue of a girl about to be sacrificed in a weird religious rite, you know you are in Spielberg country.

The scene is late Victorian London. The adolescent John Watson enters a school and meets a slightly older schoolmate named Holmes, S. All around their school and London, at first without their knowledge, strange killings of elderly men take place. Each victim dies after wild hallucinations induced by a drug on the tip of a thorn shot into him through a strangely marked blowpipe. One of the victims is a pretty girl's uncle, a former teacher of Holmes and a nutty inventor whom Holmes has been assisting with his flying machine (which the youth later perfects).

The hallucinations of the different victims are sensational. They have been devised by Industrial Light & Magic of Marin County, California, a George Lucas shop. Next in ingenuity is the casting of Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox as the young Holmes and Watson. Both are first-rate; and both splendidly predict the famous characters they will become.

Besides its zing-along adventures, which are never the least bit credible or boring, *Young Sherlock Holmes* clarifies: why the mature Holmes wore a deerstalker; why he smoked a calabash; why he never married. Spielberg has once again opened a new avenue of film. Maybe we can look forward to *Young Gulliver*, *Young Robinson Crusoe*, *Young Don Quixote*, and more. □



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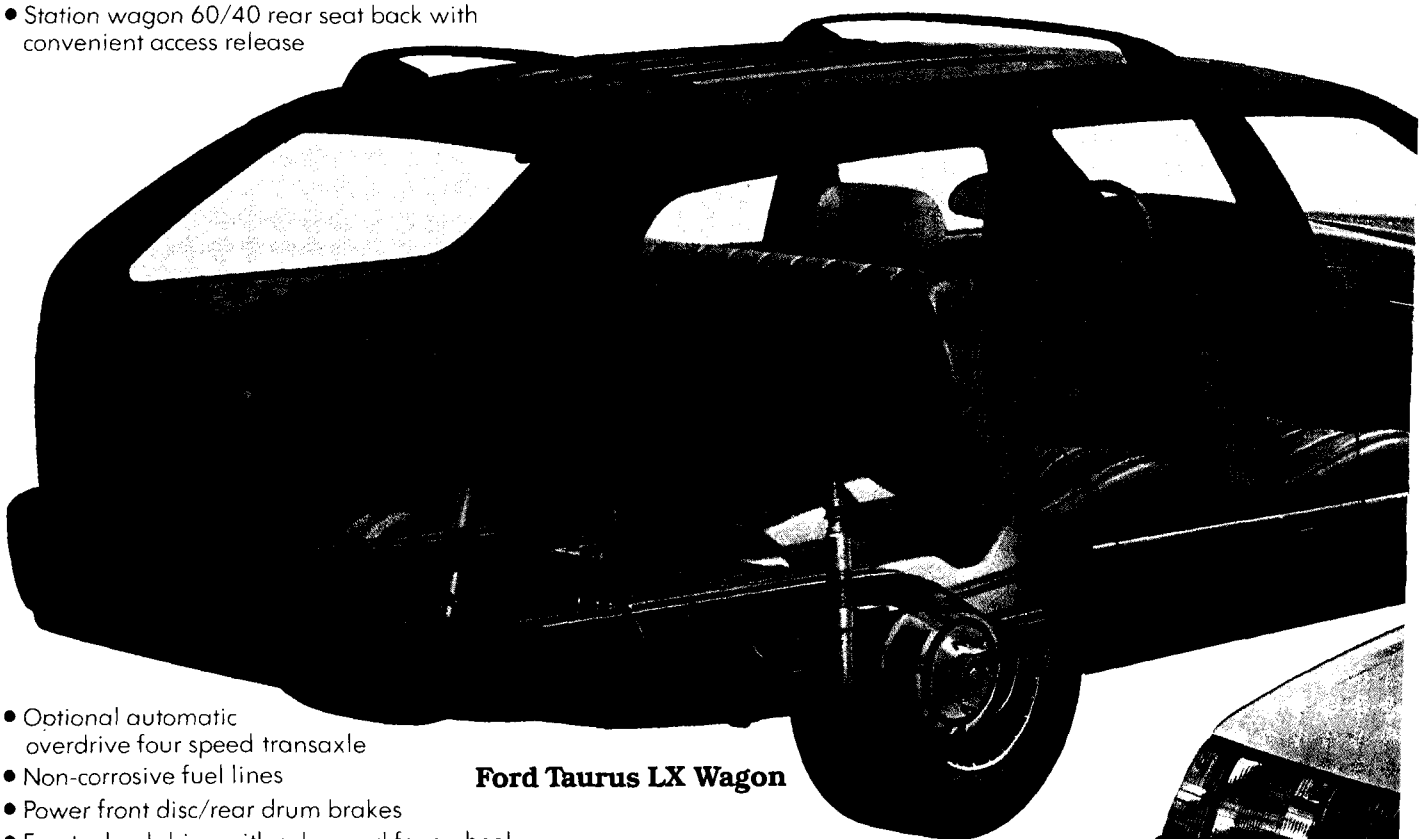

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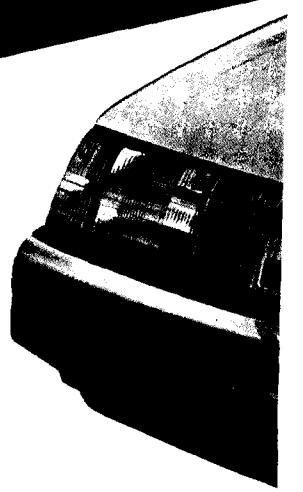

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Receiving an Award

My theater received a generous cash prize the other day from the Jujamcyn group of Broadway theaters; the award stirred a mess of conflicting emotions in my breast. Those aware of my expressed attitudes toward awards that incite competition in a collaborative art by singling out individuals or institutions might safely conclude that I oppose them only when they go to others—and I'm ready to concede, having an ignoble competitive nature, that it's a lot more gratifying to participate in such award ceremonies than to criticize them. In the case of the Jujamcyn prize, which goes each year to a nonprofit resident theater for creative achievement, it was to some degree an expression of gratitude to the American Repertory Theatre for having first developed the musical *Big River*, now successfully housed in a Jujamcyn theater, the Eugene O'Neill.

So my pride in receiving this prize on behalf of the theater was somewhat mitigated by the fact that it came as much for what we had contributed to Broadway as for what we were in ourselves. It was for that reason that I accepted the prize on behalf of the entire resident theater movement (though we kept the check) with a speech reflecting on the increasingly problematic relationship between commercial producers and the nonprofit theater movement.

I bare these personal conflicts in public not just to explain my own apparent contradictions, but because I believe they have a general application to our culture. The American theater, like American society, is most healthy when most pluralistic; all forms of creative activity—whether commercial or noncommercial, conventional or experimental, popular or advanced—have a place in this country. This means that any decline in the number or quality of Broadway offerings adversely affects everyone working in the theater. But it also means that the nonprofit resident theaters centered in so many American cities outside of New York must labor unceasingly to preserve their identities in the face of mounting pressures to change them, whether these come internally from boards, audiences, or artists, or externally from Broadway producers seeking inexpensive tryout centers. Only by adhering to their original goals can the nonprofit theaters continue to provide help for the American theater as a whole while preserving the diversity that becomes a healthy culture.

One obstacle in the way of these goals is descriptive words, since both people and institutions tend to conform to the way they are characterized verbally. And two words often applied to institutional theaters outside of New York have always bothered me—"tributary" and "regional." "Tributary" is a topographical term suggesting a small stream that feeds a large river; "regional" is a geographic term suggesting a form of activity indigenous only to one restricted area, populated, one might infer, largely by cattle, geese, and long-horned sheep. In our profession, the use of the word "tributary" implies that the primary function of out-of-town theaters is to provide worthy entertainment for New York audiences, while to call them "regional" suggests the very opposite, consigning these institutions to provincial isolation and localized status.

In each case, the resident theater movement, as I prefer to call it, is being asked to consider itself an essentially parochial phenomenon, of use to American culture only when it manages to develop a work that later becomes a Broadway hit. Such is the power of this idea that resident theaters have not only begun announcing these intentions in their brochures ("See these shows at lower prices before they go to Broadway"), but in a few cases have even abandoned their home cities to take up residence in New York. Yet it could be argued that the most artistically satisfying—and perhaps even the greatest number—of Broadway hits first developed by resident theaters were effective precisely because they were originally designed not for future profits but for the aesthetic fulfillment of the theaters and their audiences. It is partly for this reason that the idea of the permanent ensemble has become so crucial to some of us in the resident theater movement—not just because we believe a group of playwrights, actors, directors, designers, and support staff working together over a period of time creates a more integrated product, but because permanent companies offer the luxury of continuous process, a greater opportunity to create these products in the future than does a pickup cast gathered opportunely for a single shot at the main chance.

The National Endowment for the Arts has lately been recognizing the value of permanent companies through a program of grants to start new ones and to consolidate and expand those that already exist; it would behoove all concerned with the future of American theater to recognize these benefits as well. A true resident theater, like a dance group, opera company, and symphony orchestra, is primarily a resource for its own geographic area, no matter how much it may tour or generate works of interest to other cities; if it serves its area well, it will eventually become valuable nationally and internationally. It is true that *Big River*, originally developed at the American Repertory Theatre under the direction of Des McAnuff before being amplified further at McAnuff's theater in La Jolla, went on to entertain larger audiences on Broadway. But if we had produced *Big River* with Broadway rather than our own audiences in mind, undoubtedly the results would have been significantly different—more tentative, more cagey, more cautious. And if the show had moved to New York with the original American Repertory Theatre company, then our process would have been seriously interrupted and all future projects would have been forced to start from scratch in Cambridge.

Process is a term not always honored by those who demand results in the theater, though even big corporations appreciate the importance of research and development. Process in our profession involves training and experimentation, patience, circumspection, and especially a tolerance for failure, because what often looks initially like a colossal mistake is really a muscle flexed for a larger leap in the future. Process also requires a sense of permanence and stability, without which no collective art form can survive for long. Yet such is the impatient demand for instant gratification on the part of those hungry for hits that the normal state of American theater is disintegration; its recent history is that of wrecked institutions, empty Broad-

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way houses, and quickly closed shows.

Criticism is partly responsible because it is the nature of critics (and our obligation) to judge the result rather than examine the process. In so doing, however, we must recognize how much we contribute to the unnatural state of affairs that now prevails in the theater. By acting as guides to consumers rather than as analysts of an art form, we invariably tend to treat theater productions as marketable commodities, significant only when they have the potential to be appreciated by a larger ticket-buying public. By scouting out shows that might have larger market value, we let our "standards" become instruments of a quasi-commercial transaction. And by encouraging productions to move intact from out-of-town venues to New York, we inadvertently restrict the diversity of theater and limit its possibilities.

Critics should recognize that not only does the American theater profit from diversity, but so does American society at large, that all roads do not necessarily lead to Rome, but rather to interesting pockets of culture in many cities of the nation. What seems to me really parochial and provincial is the assumption that art is not properly validated until and unless it is shown in New York, for this both denies the existence of a really vigorous national culture and, in some odd way, eats into the possibilities of a healthy New York culture too. Walt Whitman once said, "You don't go to New York to grow fruit, you go there to sell it." He was affirming that the nurturing process necessary to all great art is not possible under the harsh glare of a result-oriented marketplace. New York now has some significant nurturing gardens for the theater arts and will no doubt develop more in the future. But the Broadway fruit markets that now stand empty and abandoned, the produce rotting on the marquees, will flourish again only when our cultural mediators recognize that growth can be an important end in itself, and not just an impatient stage on the way to consumption.

The myth of the CD and the miracle of the LP.

THE QUEST FOR PERFECT SOUND

BY EDWARD ROTHSTEIN

Today for reproduction
I'm as eager as can be;
Count me among the faithful fans
Of High Fi-De-Li-Ty.
—"The Song of Reproduction"
by Flanders and Swann
from *At the Drop of a Hat* (1959)

As I write these words, I am listening to a $12.98 record played through about $15,000 worth of audio equipment. That decimal point is not misplaced. The turntable, made by SOTA of polished koa wood, weighs more than 40 pounds and has a vacuum pump that pulls the record down onto a specially designed mat made of acrylic. The $1,200 tonearm is hand-machined according to a design by David Fletcher, and is so definitive that it has been called, simply, "The Arm." The cartridge, which alone costs more than most rack systems bought in department stores and discount audio salons, is carved from rosewood by Koetsu. The cables that pass the refined signals to the amplifying electronics, made by a company called Monster Cable, contain numerous strands and twists meticulously arranged according to the results of years of research, and cost about $80 for a one-meter pair. There is a solid-state preamplifier, made with exquisite care without any integrated circuits by Mark Levinson; an amplifier using seemingly old-fashioned vacuum tubes made by a company with a lowercase name but high-cost and high-quality products, conrad-johnson; and two speakers, made by Magnepan, that are about six feet tall and an inch-and-a-half deep, and are constructed of vibrating ribbons.

Everything sounds extraordinarily good, but not quite good enough. I am, you see, a convert to what has been called the "High End," and though almost all of this equipment has been borrowed, once one has entered into this world of extraordinarily reproduced music, there is no turning back. It is a dance of seven veils, but there is always another one to lift; each sonic revelation shows how much remains. And somewhere, at the unreachable end of this passage into technological reproduction, there is something very humble, simple, and unremarkable: the sound of a man playing the harpsichord, a woman singing Schubert, an orchestra playing in Carnegie Hall.

The endless quest for what is, after all, so easily apprehended in the concert hall is at the heart of the High End. It is a world of the audio equipment few of us have ever heard and fewer could afford. The companies are not Sony and Panasonic and Hitachi but Audio Research and Linn Sondek and VPI and PS Audio and Infinity. Sales are measured in hundreds of units rather than in hundreds of thousands. There are turntables that cost well over $10,000, and speaker systems that cost more than $40,000; there are $10,000 amplifiers that can seem to act as room heaters as well as music generators; there are record clamps that press a recording down to a mat, electronic stylus cleaners that vibrate the grunge off what used to be called a needle, bricks of steel wrapped in wood that are meant to be placed over an amplifier's transformers, hypodermic needles full of a fluid that increases metal conductivity to be applied by the droplet to all connectors, meters to determine which way a plug should be put into a socket, pointed metal cones to rest speakers on.

There are purists who believe that having a telephone in the room with a system can affect its sound and that a television in the same room should not just be turned off, but

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should have the dial moved between channels. There are eccentric designers, one of whom goes so far as to include a diaper with his amplifier, because of the sound's supposed dramatic impact on muscle control. There are also brilliant designers who have come from other professions—physics, economics—inspired by a passion for perfecting sound. And there are special journals that discuss this equipment as if it were a fine wine, sipping from sonic riches, commenting on flavor and coloration, dimensionality and body.

The High End can be, at worst, another form of conspicuous consumption, in which wealthy hobbyists spar with speaker cables and sapphire styli. But this is not a refuge just for the indulgent rich. There are ways into the High End for a few thousand dollars. And it may have begun to attract even those who must look only from afar. The most brilliant and influential journal of the High End, *The Absolute Sound*, has a circulation of over 20,000 and is still growing. We are living in a period of immense technological change in recordings—like the 1930s and 1950s—largely because of the advent of digital recording in 1978 and the digital compact disc in 1983. These new technologies have focused the attention of millions on the quality of sound being heard. This has caused the High End itself to become better known; despite its esoteric character, it has had an often polemical effect on the world of commercial music. Some of the most articulate High End circles have attacked the very technological advances it would seem they would have welcomed, rejecting the compact disc for the long-playing record, solid-state electronics for vacuum tubes, contemporary recordings for those made in the 1950s. The High End is partly a Romance, a quest for something beyond the reach of any equipment—the live music itself. That quest means using technology to overcome itself, making it invisible at the very moment of its greatest achievement.

I have spent several months in a state of audiophilia learning how to listen to this equipment, on loan from manufacturers, distributors, and dealers—switching turntables, preamplifiers, amplifiers, cables, recordings and remastered recordings, compact disc players, tape machines—playing and playing with more equipment than I will ever be able to buy, attempting to take its measure. I heard a system that may be one of the world's best, costing perhaps $90,000, and listened, too, for one I would be able to afford. The more I heard, the more I was entranced; the more entranced, the more I was puzzled. What is the nature of this drive for "high fidelity" in sound? What are the differences in qualities of sound? What does all this do for music? And what implications does it have for the way in which we listen?

The History

I had a little gramophone
I'd wind it round and round
And with a sharpish needle
It made a cheerful sound.
—"The Song of Reproduction"

The urge to reproduce music must be as old as the urge to make it. According to *From Tin Foil to Stereo*, a staggeringly detailed history of the phonograph by Oliver Read and Walter L. Welch, the earliest attempt to reproduce a voice was

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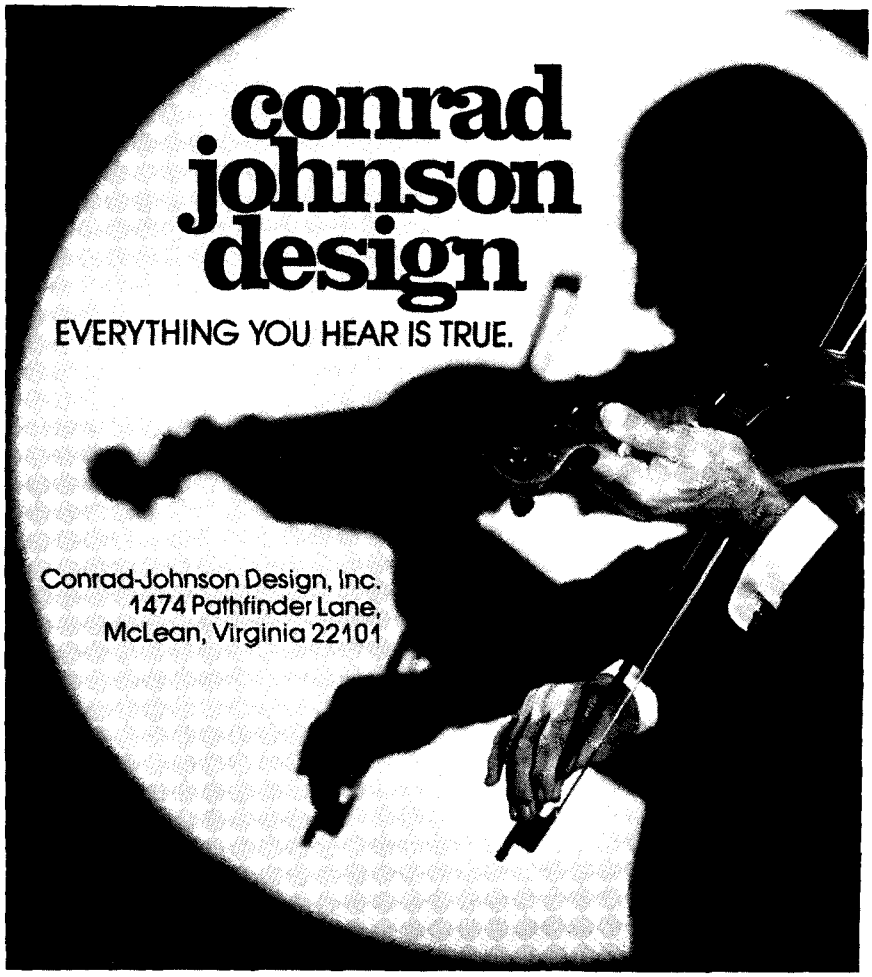
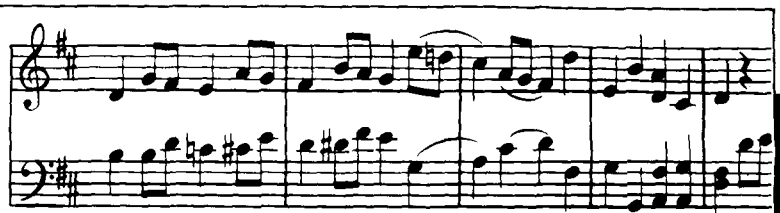
the statue of Memnon at Thebes, built about 1490 B.C. Memnon, at sunrise, was supposed to sound a vocal greeting to his mother, the Goddess of the Dawn, a voice that emerged perhaps from the passage of wind over hidden air chambers in the stone.

The re-creation or preservation of the human voice does indeed have mythic, monumental overtones. The preservation of sound is quite different from the preservation of visual image in painting, sculpture, or photograph. Capturing a voice is more magical than capturing an image; the voice leaves no physical impression. It is, instead, linked directly with the life of another. During the 19th century, when European musical culture passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie, the voices and music of the aristocracy were called forth by pianos in the drawing rooms of the middle class. But the passion for possessing a voice was to become far more radical the closer the possibility of preservation became.

That became clear in 1877, when Thomas Alva Edison recited "Mary had a little lamb" into his reproduction machine, and the needle etched out the wave forms of his speech into tin foil. *Scientific American* wrote:

> It has been said that Science is never sensational; that it is intellectual, not emotional; but certainly nothing that can be conceived would be more likely to create the profoundest of sensations, to arouse the liveliest of human emotions, than once more to hear the familiar voices of the dead.

The phonograph wrested the voice and its music from oblivion. The latent power in the humble turning cylinder was the focus of business warfare, litigation, espionage, contention over patents, formats, market rights, and investments. What seemed at first to Edison little more than a business and dictating machine became much more. By the First World War, special public concerts began to combine live singers with recordings. A singer might sing in unison with a recording played on an acoustic phonograph fitted with an enormous horn, stopping from time to time to let the machine be heard, accompanied by gasps from the audience. "The most sensitive ear," read a London report of one such recital by Hardy Williamson, "could not detect the slightest difference between the tone of the singer and the tone of the mechanical device."



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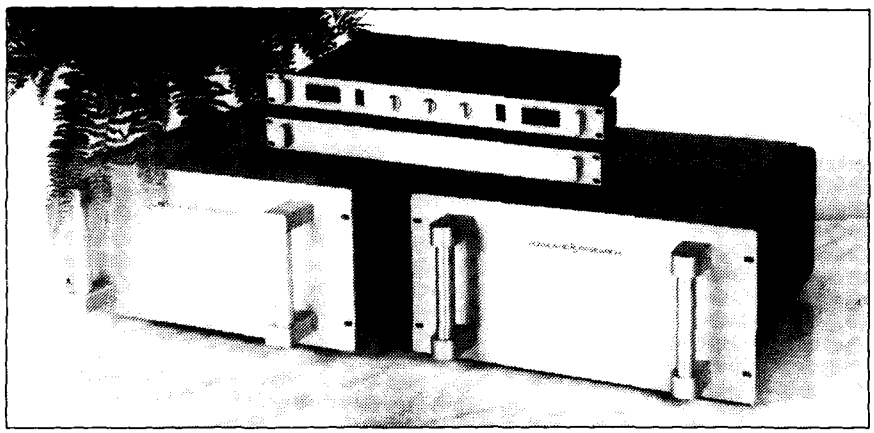

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The Absolute Sound, No. 34 (Summer '84)

Issue 39 Is Out

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The impulse for realism and accuracy was so strong that Edison, partly deaf in his later years, used to bite into the cabinet of a phonograph to try to sense through the vibrations of his bones whether each instrument in an ensemble was being properly recorded. There were debates then, as now, about accuracy, about how and whether room acoustics could be captured, about the format of recordings. Original records were made on cylinders that proved fragile; the flat disc won out, though it involved a compromise in quality.

A half-century ago, *Gramophone* had this to say about audio devotees:

> In those days [of acoustic recordings] battle raged between two schools of opinion, who called themselves, respectively, Realists and Romantics. The Realists stood out strongly for as accurate a reproduction as possible of the actual sounds recorded, but the Romantics held that a certain sacrifice of accuracy was permissible, nay, even desirable, if it induced a quality more pleasing to the ear. To a Romantic, realistic records were always "shrill" or "thin" or both. To a Realist, a romantic record would appear "woolly" or "foggy." . . . With the advent of the electrical recording process of recording, it may be said that the dispute ended. The Romantics were drummed off the battlefield.

The same distinction remains, even today, played out in debates over equipment and recording.

I HAVE an old Victrola XA, a cabinet record player that sold in 1917 for $85, and occasionally I will turn the crank on the side, put a new steel needle into the weighty arm, set the speed control, and play a record from the period, listening through the sound of metal pulled through a worn groove of plastic. Under the whir and spits of interference of these shellac discs, the "familiar voices of the dead" do indeed come to life. But not even the most untrained ear could confuse this sound with the live sound of music. How, then, could people at the time be struck with the realism of the sound, and discern the ambience of the room, the position of the artists, and even in certain cases, the dimensions of the recorded ensemble? It would seem there is a language of recording learned; the listener translates, mapping the heard sounds into a real world, placing the distorted frequencies into a mouth or instrument, and reconstructing sound and its inten-

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tion. The cues are subtle, but they can be relearned. It is possible to listen through the veils, as if peering through a smudged window, to discern the music beyond.

THROUGHOUT the history of recording, nothing remained steady for very long. The quality of that image changed substantially, for example, with the advent of electrical amplification. Musical reproduction until then was purely mechanical and acoustic. A sound caused a vibration that was etched in a disc, which was in turn traced to re-create the vibration and then the sound. With amplification, the mechanical energy had to be transformed into electrical energy, amplified, and then transformed back again. In 1935 the editor of *Gramophone* in England, Compton Mackenzie, wrote:

> Of one thing only am I completely certain at this moment, which is that the really passionate devotee of the gramophone for a long time to come will get more pleasure out of his instrument if it is acoustical, and I am even going to add hand-wound, than if it is electrical. This is not a question of sour grapes. I challenge any reader who possesses the finest electrical gramophone to capture the spirit of music as successfully as the owner of a Mark Xb, an Expert Senior or a Cascade.

The "spirit of music" undergoes still greater modification with time, with Mackenzie's reaction reappearing again and again—sometimes with justice, sometimes without. But with each transformation the language of hearing shifts slightly, until the ear becomes used to more radical processing of sound. By the 1950s, long-playing records had become the norm, following a "war of the speeds" between Columbia, which produced records at 33 1/3 rpm, and RCA, which pushed for 45 rpm. Apart from stereo itself, there also developed conventions of processing sound, including an automatic distortion at the point of cutting the record ("the RIAA curve"), meant to be undone at the time of playback. Recordings were not to be simply authentically made, but a product made to sound "good." The manipulation of sound itself became a convention in the recording industry. For example, when recordings were made in the early days of stereo in the late 1950s and early 1960s, generally three microphones were used, and were fixed in place and amplitude; with the increased "sophistication" of recordings, it became customary by the late 1960s to use even dozens of microphones over an orchestra with the engineer "mixing" the sound to bring out a solo line or bring down the brass.

The 1950s saw the beginning of a refined "hi-fi" market, often with devotees building their own amplifiers and speakers and component systems. During the last two decades there were two contradictory developments in both equipment and recordings as "hi-fi" became popular. First, in equipment, the Japanese rose to prominence in mass manufacture, with components dropping radically in price as they rose in availability; but at the same time, partly in response, the "High End" began to develop. Similar contrasts have developed in recording technology. Digital recording techniques and the compact disc player were the culmination of a decade of various attempts to improve sound on discs for the mass market; at the same time, a few engineers attempted to perfect the traditional analogue recording, even by returning to microphone techniques and vacuum tube equipment used 30 years ago.

The Recordings

Perfect Sound, Forever—Philips advertisement for the digital compact disc.

It's the greatest step backward in the history of audio—Doug Sax, recording engineer for Sheffield Labs, on digital recording.

I don't think the High End can be fully understood without attention to what is now crudely called the "software"—the recordings themselves. Until 1978 the basic approach for all the processing of sound on records was the same as that used by Edison a century earlier. The grooves of the record contained minute wave forms that were "analogues" to the wave forms produced in air by the sound. The record was a physical map of physical waves. The magnetic master tape from which this record was made was simply an intermediate step by which intensities and tones could be easily manipulated.

But in 1978 digital recording became practicable. It changes the wave form into a series of numbers, each number specifying a sonic "location" of some kind. Because a wave is continuous, digital recording involves "sampling" the wave at regular intervals, as if a stroboscopic camera were taking its pic-

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ture. If the strobe were fast enough, the wave would seem continuous. A piece of music is then completely coded in the form of numbers. One apparent advantage is that a performance can be permanently fixed, not subject to decay: a copy of a tape is presumably equivalent to the original, since it contains only a finite and immutable array of numbers, simply reproducible. This digital information is then converted back to analogue and used to create standard recordings.

The advent of the compact disc meant that everything could remain digital up until the final electronic stage; there was no need to translate the numbers back into wave forms of vinyl. The numbers are coded in binary on/off fashion as pits on a 4.7 inch silvery disc. The pits are read by a laser light and a detector. The result has been thought by many to be the absolute sound, the evolutionary culmination of a century of recordings.

In 1983, when the disc was introduced in the United States at a retail price of close to $20, there were 1.5 million sold and 35,000 players sold at prices of close to $1,000. In 1984 there were 4.5 million discs and a quarter million players sold (worldwide the figures were 17 million discs and 900,000 players). This year's domestic sales are expected to be well over 10.5 million players, with many players priced below $300 and some discs below ten dollars. Polygram, the recording company that owns London, Deutsche Grammophon, and Philips records, now gets more than half its revenue from the compact disc. At Tower Records' Washington store, the sale of compact discs accounts for as much as a third of its overall sales. At record stores all over, the racks of LPs are steadily decreasing as CDs (as they are called) expand their territory. LP sales have been declining from $2.473 billion in 1978 to $1.69 billion in 1983. Recordings by the major companies, in the meantime, have become exclusively digital in their initial processing. What has happened is nothing less than a revolution in the format of recorded sound.

THE VIRTUES of the compact disc are clear to all. It holds more than 70 minutes of continuously playable sound; it is relatively impervious to dirt and scratches and completely impervious to wear; it contains no tape hiss (if digitally recorded) and no background noise; it is immensely convenient. In the mainstream audio press and daily newspapers, the disc has been welcomed unambiguously for its remarkable sound. Digital recordings have been hailed as the next best thing, originally priced higher than ordinary records, manufactured with more care. Speakers are now being hailed as "digital ready" because they can "handle" the superior dynamic range of compact discs; more powerful amplifiers are selling as well. This interest in quality of sound would seem to fit quite well with the focus and devotion of the High End.

But the result is a shift far greater, and more ambiguous, than that from acoustic to electric that disturbed Mr. Mackenzie so much in 1936. In a perceptive column in the November 1985 issue of *Audio*, Ivan Davis summarized the philosophical differences between digital and analogue recordings. Analogue builds models, he points out, "on the optimistic assumption that our modeling technology is infinitely perfectible." The object in traditional recording was to get the grooves in the record to be as close an analogue as possible to the physical waves hitting the microphone, and then to get the

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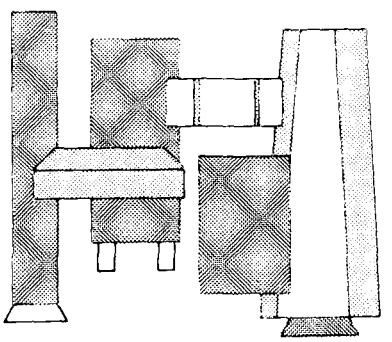

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playback mechanism to re-create the original. Digital, on the other hand, chooses a level of perfection—the sampling rate—"not approximating perfection but perfecting our approximations." Analogue is a hyperbola, ever straining at the final goal. Digital jumps to progress; "the only way to raise our current technology's limits would be to come up with an entirely new digital system." Digital has chosen a "format" that limits both the information and its potential. This leads, Mr. Davis suggests, to a frustration in the audiophile used to coming ever closer to the perfection of live music. In some way, digital undercuts the infinite desire of the High End. Does it, then, displace it?

THE PROBLEM is not merely philosophical. After months of listening, *I have not heard a single compact disc that sounds as good as the identical recording*. I have heard discs from every major label (and some minor ones)—CBS, Philips, London, Deutsche Grammophon, Chandos, Proprius, RCA, Reference Recordings, Nonesuch, Angel, Erato, Orfeo, A&M. I have listened to chamber works and opera, orchestral blockbusters and solo piano music. I have heard digitally recorded material, and CDs of old analogue classics—including CDs of performances of Reiner and the Chicago Symphony and the Beethoven cello sonatas played by Rostropovich and Richter. I have also listened to the discs on two superior latest-generation players—the Nakemichi OMS-5 and what may be one of the best players made today, the Meridian Pro-MCD.

In some cases, the differences are shocking. A recording can be rich with detail and nuance, while the CD sounds musically raw and untamed, like a recounting of the same musical event by someone with a strong voice but slightly bad hearing. Details are lost even though firmness of pitch and frequency response are heightened. In other cases the differences are more subtle. Out of the silent background of the CD can come some impressive sonic effects, which because of the silence become still more finely etched; the record may sacrifice that silence, but places the players in a real room rather than against a black velvet curtain. The CD is an immediate, instantaneously impressive achievement, but it cannot be lived with in a sustained musical fashion. In a sound system of sufficient resolution, CDs end up sounding not like perfect

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sound, but like perfectly unreal sound. They begin to gnaw at musical sensibilities; one loses the sense of musical gesture, of delicately shaped phrasing, of communication between players. There is no relation, for example, between the sound of a piano on a CD and the real thing; the CD also seems to lose overtones and turns the pungent sound of the piano hammers' impacts into "mellow" marimba tones.

In fact the CD samples sound without fully re-creating it, much as the player piano did with real performance. The mechanical piano was a digital machine: it had perhaps two dozen levels of dynamics and time coded in punched holes on a piano roll. The story is told that Artur Schnabel, unlike many other artists of the period, refused to make piano rolls; if they had 20 levels of dynamics, he said, I have 21. The technological arguments about digital are intricate, but at bottom is the fact that even though our digital system samples sound at more than 44,000 times a second, that is less than the infinite sampling of traditional analogue. And that difference can be heard.

BUT IF the CD is so patently unmusical, then how could the common assumption be so different? The key may be in the "sufficient resolution" of my system—the turntable I have on loan is not the sort one picks up at Crazy Eddie's. In fact, the turntable, arm, and cartridge may be the most important parts of an audio system. When I began to research turntables, I immediately dismissed the idea of spending more than $500 for one. But at a dealer's store I was played the same record on three different turntables, with the rest of the system identical—a Denon direct-drive turntable, such as might be a standard purchase by a musically serious listener; an AR turntable, which is completely manual and which has audiophiliac ambitions; and a British turntable I had hardly heard of, a Linn Sondek, which sold with its arm and cartridge for more than $1,000. Not only did each turntable have its own distinctive sound, but there were radical differences in the musical qualities of the results. The opening clarinet solo of Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," for example, sounded very respectable on the Denon, but there was something awry in the rhythmic fluency of the playing, something I would have ascribed to the performance; moreover, the rising swoop of the line was bland, innocuous. The AR turntable gave the player and his instrument more body; it sounded like a different recording. But on the Linn table, a musical window was thrown open. The rhythmic play with bar lines, the heady sway of the orchestra (it was an old Leonard Bernstein recording) were almost intoxicating after the relatively washed-out sounds of the other players. The turntable I have had most experience with—the SOTA (an acronym for State Of The Art)—also has a distinctive musicality, engineered by Rodney Herman and David Fletcher, that is different yet again from the Linn.

MERE mechanical equipment, then, can reveal musical qualities rather than just increase something abstract like "high fidelity." The reasons are not obscure. The signals in a record groove are of minute size; a difference of only ten atoms of vinyl can actually be heard. The maximum amplitude of any signal is only 25 microns (millionths of a meter). A turntable must not only rotate at the precise speed, but prevent any of that information from being lost through resonances and damping in the table, the cartridge, or the arm. Just as a well-constructed piano will permit sonic differences to emerge out of nuances of physical movement, the same should be true of a turntable. It is equally clear that the vast majority of turntables being used to play records are not musical instruments. So much information is lost that in listening to a CD player it seems that so much more is gained.

But in comparing a CD player of cheap vintage to a turntable of cheap vintage, there still is a difference in favor of the turntable. We have been educated in the language of a certain kind of recorded sound; mass-market turntables mute strong base, sand down contrasts, make pitch slightly uncertain, roll off high frequencies. In these respects, the CD is clearly superior. Given the reference of ordinary turntables, the CD appears to be "real." We are so taken aback, we become like those amazed concertgoers early in the century who ecstatically proclaimed that the sound of an acoustic gramophone with a large horn was indistinguishable from live music. Meanwhile, the musical elements of the recording, its gestures and nuances, are there even in their pale forms in the sounds coming from the vinyl, but

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will never be heard from the CD.

Various High End companies are attempting to create CD players that take musical values seriously, to at least make the most of a format that is simply not intrinsically advanced enough. But the CD was designed as a mass-market phenomenon, to rescue the ailing recording industry. That industry has failed to take seriously enough how much information is on the LP, and how valuable it is. The CD was rushed into production with a sampling rate that is simply not high enough to avoid innumerable sonic problems. Skills in using digital techniques have increased greatly since 1978—the early acclaimed recordings are almost unlistenable. But the black vinyl record is still the most sophisticated musical source of recorded sound. It is, however, passing into oblivion before these virtues are fully extracted.

IT HAS BEEN one of the achievements of the High End critics to demonstrate how much musical information is present on recordings made in the 1950s, when the goal was simply to capture what was being played rather than to manufacture it. Early stereophonic recordings on Mercury and RCA, on Archiv and London are rich in both range and precision. They allow the instruments in an orchestra to have a place in space and time, undistorted by an engineer's idea of scoring. There has been some effort made in the best digital recordings by Telarc, for example, to return to earlier recording styles with the new technology. But for the most part, digital recordings are edgy in the high frequencies, giving unrealistic timbre to the woodwinds, and missing the sensuous combination of attack and decay in piano recordings. Audiophile recording labels, such as Wilson Audio, Sheffield Labs, and Reference Recordings, have explicitly rejected digital recording methods, to produce some of the best-sounding records today; unfortunately, on a musical scale they often cannot compete with the performers on the worst recordings.

These failures and achievements in recording technology are, for the most part, invisible on a mass scale, because our hierarchy of musical values in recorded sound has become distorted by the technology. We will pick the values of a hi-fi sound over the values of a real sound. The philosophical purpose of the High End, it would seem, is to both listen *through* a recording and *to* it—to rescue recorded music from its hi-fi context, by perfecting the way in which we attend to the medium itself.

The Absolute Sound

The Absolute Sound is the sound of unamplified music occurring in real space—
Harry Pearson, editor, *The Absolute Sound.*

There is thus a paradoxical relationship between the High End and music. On the one hand, it requires a sensuous, sometimes fetishistic involvement with the equipment itself. On the other, the ultimate goal of this involvement is the naturalness and ease of real music, the equipment subsumed by its own sounds. The compact disc and digital sound are just case histories in a much larger audio universe; the High End teaches listening by first showing what we have not been hearing.

This is actually a radical stand in a mass-market industry that has come to define itself not through listening but through charts of specifications on distortion, rumble, signal/noise ratio, clipping headroom. Reading the magazines of mass audio—*High Fidelity* and *Stereo Review*—means reading through stilted lab reports of various kinds that measure the technical characteristics of the equipment, devote some time to listening, and come to genial conclusions, using phrases like "a fine little amp," "definitely warrants serious consideration," "a breath of fresh air," and, again and again, "well worth your consideration." Everything is worth considering in these worlds, because it is all thought to sound the same if basic technical standards are met.

But the statistics do not measure the musical quality of the equipment, because they address only parts of the whole. There has been no film or instrument, for example, that is as sensitive to variations in color as the human eye; the hearing of music is no less sophisticated. The "objective" pose of lab reports is a distortion. In the High End, after the technical standards have been met, the emphasis is placed on what is called "subjective"—the sound itself.

Designers of High End equipment and buyers of the equipment must become critical listeners, not just technicians. This is one reason why at the heart of the High End is a journal—*The Absolute Sound*, published and edited by Harry Pearson. Since he began the jour-

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THE EQUIPMENT

Deliver us from evil—words appearing above an ape, whose hands are clasped and eyes raised heavenward, in a British advertisement by Linn Products.

The SOTA Star ($1,600) and SOTA Sapphire ($895): These are two remarkable turntables, sold without arms. They are renowned for their accurate reproduction and sophisticated simplicity. The Star includes a vacuum clamp, which can also be fitted to the Sapphire. With a vacuum, the recording's dynamic range becomes wider, bass lines firmer, images of instruments clearer, warps more negligible. About 7,500 of these turntables have been sold since 1981, which makes SOTA the largest American High End turntable manufacturer.

The SOTA Acrylic Mat with Intermat: I scoffed at a $135 turntable mat. But when the double-layered mat is used with a record clamp, the change is shocking, making the sound at once more full-bodied and more detailed.

The Sumiko MDC-800 Arm and MMT: Designed by David Fletcher, a former nuclear physicist, the MMT arm has been hailed as an exceptional value at $250; it is a lower-priced version of the more definitive $1,200 design, which has sold a total of 530 units since 1978 and has just been replaced by another model.

The Koetsu Rosewood Cartridge: This $850 moving coil cartridge is superbly musical. It reproduces the entire frequency range without distortion or exaggeration. Its Japanese designer, Yosiaki Sugano, who builds by hand some of the most expensive and finest cartridges in the world (costing up to $2,250), was trained as a sword-maker and painter.

The Grado Signature 8M Cartridge: This $200 cartridge is a cheaper way into the High End and has become the favored recommendation for those beginning to test the waters.

The Meridian Pro-MCD CD Player: Compared to the top-of-the-line Sony model and the highly rated Nakemichi OMS-5, this $1,400 player is far superior. It is mechanically less sophisticated than even some $300 models, but the energy was put into redesign of electronics. For all my feelings about CDs, this machine gives them dimension, body, and sweetness—within their limits.

The Nakemichi Dragon Cassette Deck: Records remain the most sophisticated source of musical information, but cassettes played on this $1,800 deck come close. Even tapes I made from records were superior to CDs. High frequencies are expansive compared to other players; this one adjusts playback for each individual tape. Its physical design is awkward; its technical design musical.

Magnepan MG-III Speakers: These speakers sell for $1,995, and I bought them—the first symptom of my decline into audiophilia. They respond with accuracy, speed, and elegance, their flat panels giving music expanse as well as focus.

The PS Audio Two-C Plus Amplifier and PS IVH Preamplifier: These solid-state pieces at $690 each are an ideal way into the High End. They compromise on low bass and seem to pull the instruments away from the listener, yet they exhibit tremendous musical integrity.

The conrad-johnson PV5 Preamplifier ($1,485) and Premier 4 Amplifier ($3,000): With Audio Research, conrad-johnson is the most acclaimed designer of vacuum tube electronics in the United States. The vacuum tube, once the center of all electronics, was all but discarded in the 1960s for transistors. But the tubes have a sonic quality far different from the somewhat raw and objective solid-state sound. This is not the best equipment c-j makes, but it is generally stunning, sacrificing some definition on top and some detail below for a euphonious musical experience. An Audio Research SP-8 Preamplifier listened to for a short time sounded like etched amber to conrad-johnson's brushed gold.

The Mark Levinson ML10a Preamplifier and ML9 Amplifier: Mark Levinson has been making some of the most expensive and praised solid-state electronics for more than a decade. These cost $6,000 and are the middle of the Levinson line. This equipment has a surgical quality. It effortlessly cuts through the most demanding orchestral textures with instruments precisely placed, and inner voices clear. Vocal sibilants are a bit slurred and there is an edginess to the upper pitches of strings and voices, but the detail was inspiring.

The Krell PAM-3 Preamplifier and KSA-100 Amplifier: For the same price, the Krell equipment provides an intriguing contrast to the Mark Levinson. The surgical quality is gone, replaced by a warmth more akin to tube sound. The bass frequencies, coolly articulated by Levinson, are firmer and rounder here. In choosing electronics, taste clearly matters as much as ever-elusive truth.

VPI Record Cleaner HW-17: This is a $700 machine that just cleans records. You place the record on a turning platter, drop a brush onto it that coats it with cleaning fluid, then lower another arm over the record, which vacuums it clean and dry. This may seem frivolous indeed, but the musical results were extraordinary and unmistakable: a cleaned record had clearer definition, stronger bass, wider dynamic range, and radically lowered surface noise.

VPI Magic Bricks: These are steel blocks encased in wood that sell for $35. They are placed over the transformers in amplifiers and preamplifiers. They tighten and clarify the sound. I cannot explain, and am content with the name.

Sumiko Tweek: One who tweaks a system is one who tinkers with it; anybody who spends this kind of money on an audio system will do tinkering. Anyone who does tinkering will buy this $15 hypodermic needle of fluid to be put on any metal connections in the system. Addicts will be satisfied.

Monster Cable Interlink Reference A and Monster Powerline II: The commercial audio magazines have dismissed the sonic effects of cables in a system. But listening to these leaves no question. The improvement over ordinary speaker wire or connectors is radical, over Monster's more budget-priced cable, substantial. I am happy with these, but I won't know how happy until I hear others. . . .

I would like to thank Andrew Singer of Sound by Singer in New York, Michael Kay of Lyric Hi-Fi in New York, and Elliot Fishkin of Innovative Audio in Brooklyn for their assistance.

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nal in 1973, Pearson, a former environmental writer for *Newsday*, has actually given the industry its name—High End—and helped define its objectives. His incisive analytical skills, wit, and literate style are mixed with a self-acknowledged flakiness and an occasional cultivation of cultishness. He has called the greatest achievement of the journal "the development of [a] meaningful semantic system for describing sound" that has "now proved useful in virtually every other audio magazine." His goal has been to systematically organize those vague, metaphoric terms that are the only ways we have of communicating nuances of sound.

THIS AFFECTS hearing as well, for once a characteristic of sound has been defined, it is raised to the level of conscious awareness. Pearson has defined, for example, the notion of "soundstage," in which a finely tuned system succeeds in re-creating the physical presence of music-making in space. Before being articulated, the phenomenon of a three-dimensional world of sound etched in air was not attended to with care; it is now a major preoccupation of equipment design. *The Absolute Sound* has made explicit the extraordinary musical detail and spatial information that is coded on the ordinary record, and has drawn attention to the ways in which it is colored, shaped, textured, and revealed by the elements in the chain of the audio system. In its definitive polemics against CDs and imperfected digital sound, in its rejection of what passes for reviewing in the commercial magazines, in its insistence on unreachable reality, the journal has characterized the Romance of the High End—and changed my own hearing. *The Absolute Sound* is sometimes less balanced than its senior, sober, and often tedious ancestor in the High End world of criticism—*Stereophile*—but it is truer to the industry's esoteric spirit and goals.

Those goals can be musical, but the esotericism has another aspect. There is a descent into the equipment before there is an ascent into the music. For every pleasure taken in the revelation of a nuance of phrasing and bowing, there is another pleasure taken in the machine. The involvement of audiophiles can sometimes stop at nothing short of fetishism. To properly play a recording, for example, one must first make certain that the vertical tracking angle of the cartridge is correct, that power lines are not intertwined with signal cables, that a stereo "window" is created through placement of seat and speakers, that connectors are cleaned, etc., etc. One speaker manufacturer, Essence, provides a protractor with its speakers, so that each element can be precisely aligned; some preamplifiers are packed with a screwdriver so that various resistors can be added to the circuitry depending upon what cartridge is being used.

The pleasure is not just in listening, but in seeming to re-create sound, to labor in its service, to refine its beauty. It is surely part of the appeal of vacuum tube amplifiers that they become so seemingly alive, so part of the process of production. The conrad-johnson amplifier I am listening to glows with visual as well as sonic warmth, the tubes softly lit in violet and orange as the musical signals pass through them. The craftsmanship of the High End is musical, but also physical.

And metaphysical. In creating what is most ethereal out of what is most mundane, the simplicity of Reality is made most Romantic, because it is achieved entirely through artifice. Ivor S. Tiefenbrun, the Scottish designer and manager of Linn Products, who over the last decade convinced listeners that turntables make a substantial difference in the sound of recordings, succeeded in tapping the equipments' latent cultic aura. Linn has given exotic names to its products, like fragments or runes of lost tongues; modifications to its turntable have even been dubbed the Valhalla and the Nirvana.

THE PASSION

They are inescapably and forever damned, a perfectionist elite in sight of an approaching culmination that can never be quite attained—C. G. Burke, *Saturday Review of Recordings*, July 1950.

The speakers were Infinity Reference Standard, Series III, composed of four towers, each seven feet, six inches tall. The turntable was a Goldmund Reference, French-made, a black miniature pillar of metal and glass on which the platter turned with exquisite ease. The amplifiers—bronze, medallioned French-made vacuum-tubed models by Jadis—were behind me, and the piece of vinyl was Reference Recordings' release of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*

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conducted by Eric Leinsdorf. This audio system in Michael Kay's Lyric Hi-Fi showroom is one of the best in the world, costing perhaps $90,000. Facing the pillars that rose in the shadowy room like a primitive monument—I heard the music begin. And gasped.

For stripped away at that moment were all the illusions that I had become accustomed to in recorded sound. The equipment simply disappeared. And that disappearance made it clear how much one hears equipment itself, and how much one's imagination actively fills in. The orchestra lay before me as if I were standing on the conductor's podium, the hall rising up, dry-sounding and a bit unattractive, in back and on either side. Each instrument had a physical as well as a musical presence. It frightened because it jarred my habits of listening.

After four years of attending seven concerts a week and reviewing scores of recordings as a critic for the *New York Times*, after six months of attending to the nuances of the sound of audio equipment, attempting to judge it as one would the sound of a finely made string instrument or piano, I was no longer sure what I had been listening to, or how we listen at all. I recall states of musical alertness in which the sound of a Mozart symphony played over a two-inch speaker on a cheap Japanese transistor radio was cause for great pleasure. So little sound is necessary to communicate musical information; intricate structural nuances and references emerge even in a state of distorted artifice. The sound is ugly; the music, beautiful.

Yet here, it was clear how much of that musical experience takes place through the strain of imagining. That strain is the strain we feel in listening to hi-fi equipment, making mental efforts to expand, fill in, complete what remains heard only darkly and dimly. We are not aware of that because we have learned the language of hi-fi so well. That afternoon my sense of that language was undone, and the sound seemed present as at its origin.

I am quite sure that another generation of equipment will reveal to me what veils existed in that brief glimpse through a technical window. Was that oboe, after all, a real oboe? Was the particular way an oboe reed starts to vibrate really captured, or did I simply imagine it there because so much else was appropriate? Did Leinsdorf give the orchestra that slightly dry character or was that the hall, the cable, the recording, the microphone, the tonearm, the cartridge, the stylus, the speakers, the amplification, the connectors?

But it is still possible to settle for much less. For those of us of humble means, it is comforting perhaps to know that the curve of pleasure is a hyperbola: the first steps are the largest and most significant. It is less of a comfort to know that the later ones, soon enough, become needs. The ears become ever more aware; the music-making is always just out of grasp, because it is always made elsewhere, by someone else.

Here, as my Requiem, are the words of C. G. Burke, writing for the *Saturday Review of Recordings* in the simpler days of July 1950 about the devotees to "high fidelity":

> They want exact realism. They want the continuous splendor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra audibly present in their living rooms, indistinguishable from the orchestra in Symphony Hall, without the loss of a single overtone from cymbal or triangle. The great improvements of the last few years—ffrr and microgroove—stimulate a fiercer hunger for glories newer still. . . . Once their zeal has infected others previously contented with the placid issuance of a gentle musical entertainment from a comfy, reassuring phonograph incapable of parading the dazzle of the new records, the neophytes undergo the breathless excitement of discovery and revelation, renewed and renewed again as equipment is discarded and replaced by more elaborate or more accurate components. New values of reproduction are sought and eventually found, bit by bit, after disappointment, exasperation and expense. The original germ of discontent, cultivated, will produce progressively improved blooms, each bearing fertile seeds of untoward dissatisfaction.

Yes, true, true. But just listen.

THE FIRE THIS TIME

The Price of the Ticket: Collected Nonfiction, 1948-1985 by James Baldwin

(St. Martin's/Marek, 704 pp., $29.95)

The Evidence of Things Not Seen by James Baldwin

(Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 144 pp., $11.95)

James Baldwin's collected nonfiction, *The Price of the Ticket*, appears simultaneously with his latest work of nonfiction, *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*, a small book on the trial of Wayne Williams, who was suspected of killing many black children and youths in Atlanta but put on trial only for two of these murders, as Baldwin reminds us again and again. It is a strange book. Little in it deals with either Atlanta, or the child killings, or the trial. Baldwin is suspicious of the trial. He does not believe Williams has been proved guilty (neither does Abby Mann, who wrote the television film based on the case), but he tells us so little about the case and the trial that we cannot be very clear about his reasons for thinking so. Most of the book consists of meditations or reflections or jeremiads that may have their origins in the circumstances of the Atlanta child murders and trial, but are familiar to us from Baldwin's other nonfiction.

It is a very hard book to read. What we recall as the icy clarity of Baldwin's prose, the precision of his writing (he loves the word "precisely"), here melts and becomes somewhat muddy. The words are still there, the wonderful quotations from spirituals and blues and the Bible. But all one gets is the rush of anger and despair over the black situation, and what whites have done to make it so.

It was not always like this. Not that the tone of *The Evidence of Things Not Seen* is completely new—one finds the same in much of the writing collected in

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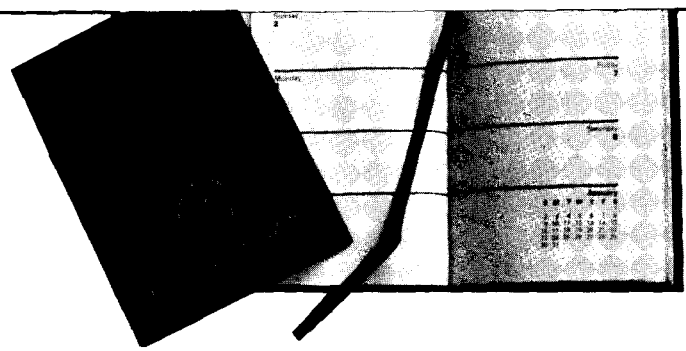
The Price of the Ticket. But that is just the problem. The black situation has changed. America has changed. Baldwin has not. Or, insofar as he has, it has been to get angrier and less precise about the targets of his anger, and to give up all hope, it seems, for black existence and the black future in America.

Which is strange indeed. His first pieces of writing date from 1948. A good deal has happened since then. Among other things, Baldwin tells us in *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*, we have had the only two presidents since perhaps Jefferson for whom "Blacks have had any human reality at all." But they are, "exquisitely, the exceptions that prove the rule." We leave out comment on the word "exquisitely," another Baldwin favorite. Why do they *prove* this rule? They are, after all, two of our last five presidents.

WHATEVER Baldwin's expectations for blacks when he was a young writer, he began his career by writing for journals that did have (and do have) hope for America, its race relations, and its minorities, that indeed were criticized for participating in and even creating the "American celebration." He remembers how he began, and with whom: "I will never, for example, forget Saul Levitas, the editor of *The New Leader*, who gave me my first book review assignment sometime in 1946. . . ." Levitas has probably never gotten a handsomer acknowledgment. But there were also *Commentary* and *Partisan Review* and *Encounter* and the *Reporter*, all of which surrounded Baldwin's sharp prose enlightening white America on the black condition with other articles expressing a predominant hopefulness for America, a hopefulness that subsequent years did not demonstrate to have been totally ill-founded.

The very first essay in the collection, and Baldwin's first substantial piece of writing, is "The Harlem Ghetto," from *Commentary* in 1948. I was on the editorial staff then; how he came to us I don't recall, but I do recall our pleasure that a remarkable young black writer—how remarkable we didn't yet know—had come to us. At that time, *Commentary* was a much more exclusively Jewish magazine than it would later become, and all we could think of suggesting to Baldwin was that he write about blacks and Jews. "The Harlem Ghetto" is much more than that. It exhibits a fully developed style as well as almost every



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theme that was to recur in Baldwin's nonfiction, and indeed many that were to be part of his fiction.

There is an immediate sense of the congestion and claustrophobia of Negro life in America, affecting every social class and every occupation. There are perceptive comments on the Negro press, in all its variants; on black leadership—political, lay, and clerical; observations on the difficulties of black intellectuals in relating to the black community, which were not so different from the difficulties Jewish intellectuals writing in *Commentary* then had in relating to the official Jewish community. "The Negro press," Baldwin wrote, "supports any man, providing he is sufficiently dark and well-known—with the exception of certain Negro novelists accused of drawing portraits unflattering to the Negro race." Which is exactly what a Jewish writer, thinking of the difficulties of Isaac Rosenfeld and Philip Roth (sometime later), might have written.

AND HE describes the complex relationship between Negroes and Jews with remarkable sensitivity, by way of analysis of an archetypal sermon. It begins with the traditional accusation that the Jews killed Christ, "which is neither questioned nor doubted," but

> the term Jew actually operates to include all infidels of white skin. . . . The preacher begins by accusing the Jews of having refused the light and proceeds from there to a catalog of their subsequent sins and the sufferings visited upon them by a wrathful God.

But he is also describing "the trials of the Negro, while the sins recounted are those of the American republic."

"At this point," Baldwin writes, "the Negro identifies himself almost wholly with the Jew." The imagery of the Old Testament is taken over to describe Negro suffering. "The images of the suffering Christ and the suffering Jew are wedded with the image of the suffering slave." But then there is the reality of the living Jews in Harlem: "small tradesmen, rent collectors, real estate agents, and pawnbrokers: they operate in accordance with the American business tradition of exploiting Negroes, and they are therefore identified with oppression and hated for it."

There is much else in these few pages, which are worth rereading today—one will of course notice wryly that the disappearance of the few Jews from Harlem has done nothing to improve matters. But my point is that this is a complex and subtle analysis of the relationship of Jew and Negro, of symbols and reality, in the ghetto. An incredibly distinctive voice came from a 24-year-old whose last formal education had been in a New York City high school. Where had he acquired that voice, so stinging and so elegant? It was a mystery, but a circle of editors, almost all Jewish, were ready to listen to, and publish, whatever he had to say.

IT WAS NOT until the late 1950s that Baldwin broke away from the *New Leader-Commentary-Partisan Review-Encounter* connection, and began to publish in magazines and journals of wider circulation. The road to *Playboy*, which sent him to Atlanta to cover the story of the murdered children, was reached through the friendly and accepting channels of the New York intellectuals. And the notes of hope—particularly when Baldwin wrote from Paris, where he covered a Congress of Negro and African writers for *Encounter* in 1951, and compared French justice less than favorably with American in *Commentary* in 1950—were not completely absent even in his own writing. Consider the guarded optimism in his report from the Paris Congress:

> For what . . . distinguished the Americans from the Negroes who surrounded us, men from Nigeria, Senegal, Barbados, Martinique . . . was the banal and abruptly quite overwhelming fact that we had been born in a society, which, in a way quite inconceivable for Africans, and no longer real for Europeans, was open, and, in a sense which has nothing to do with justice or injustice, was free.

One will find nothing like this in Baldwin's writing since the civil rights revolution. Indeed, one would think, in the light of his blazing rhetoric since the early 1970s, that the movement had failed rather than succeeded. To Baldwin it *has* failed, as he writes in *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*: "Others may see American progress in economic, racial, and social affairs—I do not. I pray to be wrong, but I see the opposite, with murderous implications, and not only in North America."

One hesitates to resort to mere facts in dealing with such unqualified pessimism, and yet his very excess will lead many readers to involuntarily contrast what they think is happening in America with what Baldwin insists is the case. Consider the following (before the 1980 election): "[In] a couple of days, blacks may be using the vote to outwit the Final Solution." Or: "The educational system of this country is, in short, designed to destroy the black child. It does not matter whether it destroys him by stoning him in the ghetto or by driving him mad in the isolation of *Harvard*." And if one were to respond in amazement, "Black students are being destroyed *at Harvard*?" Baldwin would undoubtedly answer, "White students are being destroyed there, too." Little distinction is made among blacks—or among whites. Blacks are slaves, and have remained slaves. (But whites are slaves, too.)

There is the same lack of specificity when Baldwin recurs (as he does on occasion) to the black-Jewish theme of his first essay. Between "The Harlem Ghetto" and "Negroes are anti-Semitic because they are anti-White" (*New York Times Magazine*, 1967), the voice becomes harder and harsher. The Jews are subsumed completely in the denunciation of white America ("the Negro is really condemning the Jew for having become an American white man"). One wants to protest, there are differences among Jews, and among whites. But it is all swept away in rhetoric. All this disables Baldwin from offering any precise or differentiated account of what goes on in America—and particularly of the panic over the murdered black children and the subsequent trial in Atlanta. For Baldwin, nothing has changed in America; it is as if he is frozen in a time capsule. The passage of time has only had the effect of dulling his perception of the distinctions and subtleties that were evident to him 30 years ago.

WRITING of the Atlanta child killings and the trial of Wayne Williams, Baldwin draws parallels and makes references to scarcely relevant and distant events. It seems the 13th victim was a boy from the North, and it is this that "precipitated the [official] hue and cry." This reminds Baldwin of Emmett Till, another black boy visiting in the South from the North, who whistled at a white woman and was killed for it. But what indeed is the connection? That Atlanta's black establishment only takes account of Northern blacks, not its own native citizens? That Southern whites now as then kill black boys for uppityness? In Baldwin's mind there is a connection; in the reader's

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there can only be mystification.

Another distant event of which he is reminded by the Williams trial: the Rosenberg case. What possible connection can exist, one wonders? Well, Baldwin doubts the testimony in the Williams case. It might have been fabricated:

> . . . a State, that, for example, could kidnap Morton Sobell out of Mexico, disguising it as a deportation, and slaughter the Rosenbergs by insisting that a table bought from Macy's was actually a gift from the Russians; . . . a State . . . that murders so many people, daily, domestically, and globally, and *in the name of freedom!*—yes, this State is quite capable of railroading a man to prison, and to death, by means of a false document.

But that was a spy case, and a federal case, and what possible interest could the FBI have in fabricating evidence in the Williams case?

BALDWIN has become an accusing voice, but the accusation is so broad, so general, so all-embracing, that the rhetoric disappears into the wind. No one escapes, nothing is to be done, and we can only await "The Fire Next Time." There is enough that is badly amiss with blacks to justify gloom and foreboding, and yes, expectations of disaster. But just what is amiss? It is not, it cannot be, that blacks serve on juries, or become mayors or police chiefs or judges, or become middle class. Yet all this makes no difference to Baldwin at all, or makes things worse: he refuses to consider why, if such progress hasn't made a difference, it hasn't.

"I agree with the Black Panther position concerning black prisoners," he wrote in *No Name in the Street* in 1972. "Not one of them has ever had a fair trial . . . , white middle-class America is always the jury . . . and this fact is not altered, it is rendered even more implacable, by the presence of one or two black faces in the jury box." Is one wrong to detect here that kind of recent French philosophical logic that reverses traditional French clarity—the logic by which one demonstrates a point not *despite* the existence of opposite facts, but *because* of them? How could the situation be "rendered even more implacable" by the presence of black jurors? One grasps for an explanation. Because the blacks are forced to accept white logic? Because they are intimidated by whites? What? His friend is the mayor of Atlanta, the police chief is black, the judge is black—but all this to Baldwin is simply proof that the power still lies in white hands and whites are exclusively responsible for black distress.

As Baldwin has become more famous and admired, and indeed as the black condition has changed—things that happened to him as a teenager working in various places in New York could never happen to black teenagers now—Baldwin has become, yes, more "implacable." One cannot help but think that his long residence in France must have something to do with it. When one reads (in 1972) that "some pale, compelling nightmare . . . is responsible for the irresponsible ferocity of the Omnibus Crime and Control and Safe Streets Act," one detects the unsteady observation of the visiting French leftist intellectual, and can only smile. Who now remembers that act? When one reads, in the introduction to *The Price of the Ticket*, that "a mob is not autonomous: it executes the real will of the state," or that its ideas ("that the Jews killed Christ or that the niggers want to rape their sisters") also "come from the state, which creates and manipulates the mob," one seems to hear that common leftist interpretation of the world that was dominant in France for so long.

Baldwin is still worth reading, for many things: for the early essays in particular; for the rhetorical power of *The Fire Next Time*; for the snatches of autobiography, as in *The Devil Finds Work*, where he does make distinctions (and in which whites appear as individuals, not wrapped in an all-embracing thunder); for the wonderful analyses of the movies of the white world that a very sensitive and gifted young black boy saw (in the company sometimes of a white teacher or another white friend) 50 years ago, and for much else. But his vision of America seems increasingly to be shaped by projections made up of inner nightmares and crude leftist pictures of America. We have nightmares enough of our own, God knows, and the Atlanta child murders—which have been repeated again and again in recent years, with whites in all roles—are one of them. But I find little illumination now in a rhetoric that once struck me as sharp and precise, yet now wraps everything in darkness and disaster.

NATHAN GLAZER

Nathan Glazer, professor of education and sociology at Harvard, is the author of *American Dilemmas 1964-1982* (Harvard University Press).

PLOWSHARES OR SWORDS?

The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia by Michael Schaller

(Oxford University Press, 351 pp., $22.50)

U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity: A Neo-Internationalist View by Edward A. Olsen

(Hoover Institution Press, 207 pp., $24.95)

One of the most serious charges that can be leveled against any country's policymakers is that, the war having been won, they have somehow managed to lose the peace. Thus they stand accused not only of making nonsense of their nation's sacrifices, but also of creating dilemmas with which following generations have to contend. It was precisely with the hope of establishing a "just and lasting peace" that Woodrow Wilson promulgated his 14 Points near the close of the First World War; yet the harsh realities and sordid bargaining at the Paris peace conference produced instead a flawed settlement that satisfied neither victors nor vanquished—and which, indeed, helped to drive the Ger-

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man people along the path to National Socialism and into the second great conflagration of this century.

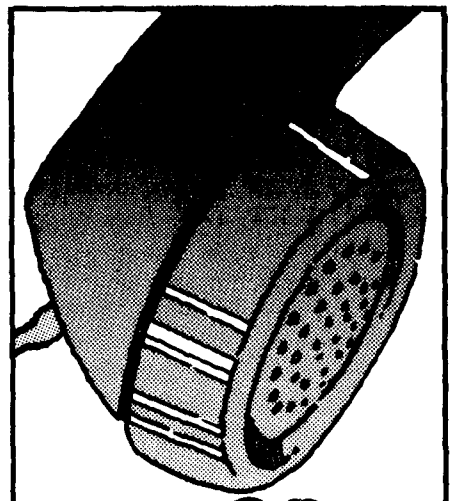
This is not to say that Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and their acolytes "caused" the Second World War, any more than Bismarck's annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 caused the First World War. Still, the fact is that many a decision made by statesmen of the time on quite rational grounds turns out later to have unforeseen consequences. And however much talented and sophisticated planning staffs "plan" for the future, history has a way of playing tricks on such predictions.

AS an illustration of this point, the reader need look no further than these two distinct but related studies of United States-Japanese relations since 1945. As Michael Schaller points out in his very good work *The American Occupation of Japan*, American military and political advisers did not fashion their plans for the future of East Asia in a vacuum, but hammered them out in the context of their own ideological and strategical concerns. There still remained widespread hopes of preserving China as a pliable client-state, despite Chiang Kai-shek's unimpressive contributions to the final victory. There were hopes, too, of replacing the old European colonial empires in southeast Asia with new regimes, which would look to Washington and be friendly to the free-market capitalist system. As for Japan itself, the planners felt that it should not only be occupied but also totally reformed, in order to eliminate any future basis for aggression. According to one of his Occupation aides, General Douglas MacArthur flew into Tokyo with the intention to

> build representative government, enfranchise women, free political prisoners, liberate farmers, establish free labor unions, destroy monopolies, abolish police repression, liberate the press, liberalize education and decentralize political power.

What eventually became the dominant consideration in the minds of these decision-makers was a fear of growing Communist influence in the Far East. The rushed Soviet occupation of Manchuria, the heated quarrels in Europe, the increasing gains made by Mao Tse-tung in China, and the nationalist unrest throughout southeast Asia all threatened the fond American vision of refashioning the Orient in accord with the political and economic principles of the Founding Fathers. Equally important, as Schaller (following earlier scholars like Akira Iriye) points out, many of the older conservative elite in Japan itself, and especially the businessmen running the giant zaibatsu, shared this fear of communism in Asia, and used that argument to slow down the radical economic and social reforms that Washington had originally planned to impose upon the conquered nation—on the debatable grounds that such measures would lead to domestic uncertainty and instability. This did not, of course, prevent many changes from being made in Japan's constitution, its political forms, and so on. But by 1947, with the Cold War at its height, and many in Washington convinced that their strategy of containment also included (to use Forrestal's words) putting "Japan, Germany, and other affiliates of the Axis . . . back to work," the pressures to break up the zaibatsu had been replaced by the desire to boost Japanese productivity and wealth as soon as possible. Such a course of action would not only make Japan into a stable pillar of a global anti-Russian coalition, but also reduce the costs of American aid.

ONE MAJOR problem with this change in strategy, however, was that the Japanese economy had earlier been heavily dependent upon trade with the rest of Asia; yet Washington specifically forbade the resumption of commercial ties between Japan and China when China fell into Communist hands. The rest of the region, moreover, was profoundly suspicious of renewed Japanese economic penetration. At this stage in its postwar development, Japan was not ready to compete in European and American markets, and therefore relied upon United States foreign aid until the Korean War brought hundreds of millions of dollars of orders for Japanese goods and services. Toyota, notably, was on the point of foundering when the first American orders for trucks arrived. In all sorts of other ways, too, the Korean War rescued the Japanese economy, and set it in the direction of producing heavy-industrial and high-technology goods. These orders did not significantly slow down during the 1950s, and by the time of the Vietnam War, Tokyo could not only supply the American military with various services, but had also broken



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into Western markets with its high-quality, low-priced products. The decline of American prestige in Asia following that war, and the recognition of China by the United States, were also useful for Japanese business, which was at last able to reenter the markets it had enjoyed in the 1930s. Truly, it was better to lose a world war than to win one.

Long before Japanese products challenged and then overtook their American counterparts across the globe, the final irony in this tale appeared: if Japan was indeed a bulwark against Communist influence in Asia, then surely—so it was argued at the State Department, the Pentagon, and elsewhere—it ought to be pressed to make a contribution to the defense of the capitalist order of which it was a part. Although this line of reasoning seemed utterly logical, it openly contradicted the original American war aim of demilitarizing Japan, and of course totally flouted MacArthur's antiwar prohibitions. It is therefore interesting to see that as early as 1948 the Joint Chiefs of Staff were urging the re-creation of a small Japanese army; and that when Dulles attempted to press this idea upon the Tokyo government during his visit of June 1950, Prime Minister Yoshida neatly retorted that both Japanese public opinion and the "peace constitution" imposed by the United States quite forbade that proposal. Japan, he added, would rely upon American power for its security.

IT IS this critical issue of "burden-sharing" in the field of defense that is at the heart of Edward Olsen's much slimmer but equally valuable study. Although irritatingly self-advertising at times, the author usefully focuses on the extraordinary imbalance that now exists within the complex politico-military-economic relationship between this country and Japan. An expert on Japanese and East Asian affairs, he is able to trace the way this problem has evolved from Tokyo's viewpoint as well as from Washington's, and to offer detailed evidence of what the Japanese are saying to each other about the steadily growing American pressure to shoulder a larger share of the defense burdens. Even so, it will disturb many readers of this book to learn of Prime Minister Nakasone's blunt March 1983 statement that "Japan will defend itself by its own efforts, but will use U.S. forces a hundred percent in an emergency. This will make the defense cost cheaper." Quite so.

AT THE beginning of this century, when Great Britain was feeling the burden of its global defense role, Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain appealed to the self-governing Dominions to lend a hand in imperial defense, warning that "the Weary Titan staggers under the too-vast orb of its own Fate." Although the circumstances of Britain in 1900 and the United States in 1985 differ in many respects, there does exist a basic similarity in this desire to shift at least some of the costs of collective defense to the "free riders" in the system. At the same time, it is essential to a laissez-faire, democratic, political way-of-life that such a shift be accomplished by negotiation and agreement, not by compulsion. And although Olsen argues that Japan must be persuaded to contribute more to the defense of Western interests in Asia, there is no certainty that the suggestion will be carried out. At the moment, at least, it is extremely convenient for Japan to spend only one percent of its GNP on defense, to concentrate its own massive foreign trade earnings and home savings ratio upon investment in future high technology, to overtake the USSR in total GNP (an amazing indictment of the Soviet system), and to enjoy the commercial benefits of its own *zenhoi heiwa gaiko* ("omnidirectional peaceful diplomacy").

As Olsen points out, a Japan that would spend, say, three percent or four percent of its GNP on the armed forces and be willing to enter into a series of regional defense pacts could be of enormous use to a globally overextended America. It is in this direction that Mr. Reagan will undoubtedly keep pressing his good friend Mr. Nakasone. But even if the current Tokyo administration can disregard the economic reasons for keeping defense spending low, it is going to have a very difficult time persuading the Japanese public to agree to such a change of policy. Conceivably, the occasional "shock therapy" that Olsen advocates will do the trick. But the fact that many of Japan's encouraging noises to Washington on this issue of "burden-sharing" are swiftly followed by reassurances to domestic pacifist opinion suggests that the "omnidirectional" diplomacy of being all things to all men continues with only minor modifications.

It is equally important for American diplomatic strategy to take into account that a strong revival of Japanese military power would be greeted with alarm and horror by most of this country's other friends in East Asia and the western Pacific. If President Marcos of the Philippines had special personal reasons for bluntly declaring in 1982 that he was "distrustful of the Japanese," his sentiments are shared by politicians in Malaysia, Indonesia, the two Koreas, and further afield. To those states, trading with Japan is one thing; living under the shadow of a rearmed Tokyo is another. In China, too, there is a profound mistrust of a possible revival of Japanese militarism, as exemplified in the recent controversy over history textbooks concerning Japan's expansion in the 1930s. And since it is against the Soviet Union (about which Olsen says only a little) that the buildup of Japan's defense forces is primarily directed, it is altogether likely that there would be forceful reactions from Moscow. Assuaging these apprehensions—all of which are well known to the Japanese themselves—while encouraging Tokyo to invest more in defense is going to be an extraordinarily difficult challenge to an American diplomacy not usually credited for its agility.

FINALLY, since American-Japanese relations have changed so profoundly over the past four decades, it is worth looking ahead another 40 years and asking the question (even if we can't answer it) of whether the revival of Japan as a great military power would be unequivocally in Washington's interests. The problem with this course for Japan—tripling its defense expenditures and agreeing to assume certain regional responsibilities, yet still remaining a compliant junior ally of the United States—is that it is an ideal scenario, and in the real world those rarely exist. Moreover, as Schaller's book demonstrates, even in the late 1940s the Japanese were showing that they could get the Americans to serve Tokyo's interests more effectively than their Occupation overlords were using Japan to realize American needs. There is little in the past record of both countries to indicate that by 2015—when Japan's total GNP will be well past the Russians' and probably very close to this country's, and when its high-technology industry (adaptable for military and space purposes) may be far superior to today's

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superpowers'—it will be easier for Washington to "manage" Japan, with its traditional strengths of social cohesion and cultural self-awareness, than it has been over the past 40 years. Indeed, all logic of the shifting interests of egotistic nation-states points to the opposite conclusion.

Disraeli used to quip that a week was a long time in politics. To American governments, keen on quick results, 40 years is therefore an impossibly long period, although these two excellent books remind one of how quickly time flies. Even so, it seems at least worth asking whether the circles now pressing Japan to turn its plowshares into swords have considered the consequences, not merely for this administration's diplomacy and strategy, but also for that of its successors.

PAUL KENNEDY

Paul Kennedy, Dilworth Professor of History at Yale, is completing a book, *The Dynamics of World Power, 1500 to 2000*.

CANADA DRY

What's Bred in the Bone by Robertson Davies

(Viking, 436 pp., $17.95)

Plot is the enemy of strong local effects in the novel, especially the novel that traces the whole life cycle of its major character. The novelist may be rendering the character's youth and adolescence splendidly, but the plot demands that he move on to the fulfillments and disasters of adulthood. Consequently, instead of a good novel about childhood, too often we get a mediocre one covering the entire life of someone we lost interest in pages ago. For it is a rare writer who can capture the Plato to Nato of a life, as it were, with equal authority.

Robertson Davies, it pains me to say, is not of that company—at least not in this novel, which takes its main character, a Canadian art authority named Francis Cornish, from a marvelously conceived childhood to a feebly presented young manhood and a positively perfunctory old age. The setting is provincial Canada—Mr. Davies is our powerful neighbor-to-the-north's most distinguished man of letters. The time, in the best parts of the novel, is the Edwardian-Georgian era. The novel opens in the present, with a discussion among several of the late Francis Cornish's relatives and friends, one of whom, as his biographer, has unearthed a scandal: Francis Cornish, the scion of a prominent Canadian banking family, had been a forger of 16th-century paintings. This prologue gives way to another and, mercifully, briefer one, in which The Angel of Biography and Cornish's personal "daimon" engage in the sort of italicized chatter about character and fate that gets books thrown against walls. These supernal spirits show up throughout, and why should a device that's perfectly acceptable in Frank Capra movies seem so ludicrous in a novel?

Once the spirits are offstage the novel finds its richest vein, a portrait of Francis's early years in Blairlogie.

> If the greater world wished to approach Blairlogie, it could very well do so by the train which made the sixty-mile journey from Ottawa over a rough line, much of it cut through the hardest granite of the Laurentian Shield, a land mass of mythic antiquity. Blairlogie saw no reason to be easily accessible.

The assured wry tone is characteristic of Mr. Davies when his talent is being released by his material (when it is being inhibited, his prose loses its voice). It is the right tone for the story of Blairlogie ("Altogether the town numbered 5000 carefully differentiated souls. . . . There were no Jews, blacks, or other incalculable elements") and of the McRory family, whose patriarch, Senator James Ignatius McRory, a timber magnate with high social ambitions for his daughter, Mary-Jim, sets the plot in gear.

"Senator" may seem to promise political intrigue, but the only politics here is McRory's maneuvering to get Mary-Jim invited to one of King Edward's balls. He succeeds; Mary-Jim is presented to her sovereign and also to a rather wooden fortune hunter, Major Francis Cornish. After the ball Mary-Jim, drunk on champagne, seduces a hotel servant—and pays for this indiscretion in the coin of pregnancy. Her unfortunate condition causes a crisis that Major Cornish transforms into an opportunity. Senator McRory returns to Blairlogie with his daughter married to one man and about to have the child of another. Mrs. McRory, a French Catholic who cannot countenance abortion, has meanwhile made Mary-Jim jump up and down so many times that the baby is born not dead, as she hoped, but severely damaged.

The baby is Francis Cornish the First. The family doctor, one of many vividly drawn minor characters, advises that he be put away. A mock funeral is held for him, and the child, now age five, is placed under the care of a loyal servant and shut up in an attic apartment. What Major Cornish, a Church of England man, makes of this peculiarly Catholic piece of casuistry we never discover.

Thus Francis Cornish the Second is born into a house harboring a shameful secret. Unhappily for him, he is also born in 1909—too young to fight in the Great War but young enough to lose his parents to it. The major and his wife take up residence first in Ottawa and then in London. They stay for the duration; it's rumored that the major is a key man in Intelligence. At home, Francis becomes one of those sad little boys whose dreamy air issues from neglect. Painting, which he becomes aware of through contemplating a print titled "Love Locked Out," helps him reclaim the world. The plot takes an agreeable turn when Francis discovers the other Francis. We, but not Francis, discover that the old manservant who has befriended the other Francis is his father.

THIS servant, Zadok, is a Dickensian achievement. A veteran of the Boer War, he was dishonorably discharged from the service for weeping over the grave of the officer to whom he acted as manservant. His emotional dis-

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play was thought to be evidence of homosexuality when really it was a sign of love. As Zadok later explains to Francis II, the impulse to love once impelled him to lavish his sexual attentions on an unhappy girl in a hotel room and love has also led him to the bedside of Francis I, whom, taking the liberties allowed to affection, he calls the Looner. Zadok goes to a pitiable grave without ever knowing that the woman in the hotel room was Francis's mother and the Looner was his son.

Zadok provides the poignancy in this first 150 pages of the novel, Dr. Upper the comedy. To the boys of the Blairlogie school, this itinerant hygienist delivers a memorable lecture on the evils of an unmentionable practice:

> He began with motherhood. His style was lyrical; he seemed almost to sing to the harp. No figure in a boy's life was so influential, so totally embracing, so holy and good, as his mother. . . . Purity of body meant a sentimental regard for one's testicles that was only slightly less wimpering than one's love for Mommy. Save for occasional washing they must never be touched, though they might be addressed, if they seemed to demand attention, in the Mommy-style of love but, in this case, also of rebuke. They must be told to be patient until the day when some lovely girl, who had kept herself pure, would become your wife on her way to the final apotheosis of motherhood. . . .
>
> If the testicles needed some stern talking-to from time to time, even more so did the penis . . .

Alas, Francis soon outgrows Blairlogie, and when he does Mr. Davies loses his imaginative footing. Francis goes to Oxford, becomes a part-time spy for British Intelligence, meets his share of (thinly) imagined Communists—one of whom, a young woman who has barely a breath of life on the page, becomes his wife and bears him another man's child. She tells him that the man who made her pregnant, a fellow student, "is the kind who makes things happen, and you're the kind things happen to." That hits the wimp on the head. Francis is just too passive a hero to sustain our interest in a book of this length. Thus under the influence of a sort of Berenson character—another vivid supporting player—Francis becomes an authority on 16th-century painting who rarely uses his authority (the McRory timber thousands having become the Cornish bank millions, Francis does not have to work) and an artist who even more rarely paints. He is a spy whose spying never comes to anything. His one possible love affair ends when his lady friend is killed in the Blitz. He develops a crush on a young art critic after the war, but this hint of the love that dare not speak its name leads nowhere. Francis does indeed fake several pictures, but what he's really faking is his life. Of Francis Cornish, both as man and fictional character, we may write this epitaph: his later life was unworthy of his childhood.

JACK BEATTY

Jack Beatty is a senior editor of the *Atlantic*.

A CUP OF SKY, A FOOT OF FIRE

I'm not the one I was,
pedestrian, thirteen, refusing to speak
to the carload of men
that slowed down on the country road;
and not the one who studied
languages at embassies, but knew
the rudiments were blood; and not
the one who swam straight up into the air
from the happiness of a tramp.
I'm not the one who lived for you, and even now
I'm not the one I was last night,
rocking and rocking myself for fear.

I couldn't kill the starfish, even
to send it to your hand. To its own
element, the dark, it
sidelonged back, it sawed
slow curves till it was out
of the box of my sight
(and out of light, which is my kind
of grasp, my handsome). What a death,

each death is. Day and night someone bewails
some other one, who went away, and stars
in droves come swimming down. A man may pass
before the feeling does.
For we were billions
when we loved each other;
when we loved each other
we were one. I'm not
the one I was.

HEATHER MCHUGH

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

They need to have behind them a shared set of premises and objectives to which the party's leaders and constituencies subscribe. Such policy and political consensus has not yet been reached on the Democratic side.

Kuttner faults me for pinpointing economic growth as the priority subject of the Center for National Policy's work to date, stating that "you might as well be a Republican" as to choose that as an "ideological theme." But economic growth is far from an ideological theme. It is the sine qua non for our survival as a free society. The means of its continuance, in the face of the historic Reagan budget deficits and their attendant side effects, is the central policy dilemma facing Democrats and Republicans alike.

Divide-the-economic-pie politics are irrelevant when the pie itself is in danger of shrinking. For Democrats weaned on the idea that economic growth was a "given," this is difficult news. But it must be absorbed and acted upon or the party will continue to be perceived in caricature by the public at large as an alliance of politicians and special-interest constituencies more focused on their own long-standing agendas than on the country's overall well-being.

If an international economic crisis is to be averted, and if the American economy is to maintain its strength, Democrats in Congress and elsewhere must be willing to join with like-minded Republicans to administer strong medicine over the next 12 months to correct the Reagan deficit atrocities before the present economic expansion runs out of steam. That means getting the big things right by cutting back a popular Pentagon budget buildup, trimming popular entitlement programs, and administering unpopular taxes.

If leaders of both political parties aren't willing to take such heat, Democrats more than likely will find them-

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selves back in the White House in 1988 and, moreover, not in need of any new ideas at all. Their new president will be facing a landscape of bank failures, farm and factory closures, and 1930s-type human tragedy. And they'll have their new slogan. They can call it the New Deal.

TED VAN DYK
Founder, Center for National Policy
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

Robert Kuttner begins his discussion of the Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies by getting the name wrong. He finishes by missing the point.

Kuttner measures the new institutions he discussed as "incubators of American liberalism." That's not what the Roosevelt Center is all about. When I want advocacy, I give money to political partisans. When I founded the Roosevelt Center, I wanted to get away from Beltway ideology-mongering and move toward greater citizen involvement in public policy-making. I am surprised that a self-described "American radical democrat" considers this Jeffersonian enterprise a waste of money. Or does Mr. Kuttner really believe that the "practical influence" for which he calls can be achieved solely through activities of, by, and for elites?

RICHARD DENNIS
Founder, Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies
Chicago, Illinois

To the editors:

Robert Kuttner is mistaken to say that Reagan and the right have only "one big idea," namely that "government is bad, private enterprise is good." In fact, conservatives today have three big ideas. One, as Kuttner states, is that government is bad. The second is that choice and tolerance are bad, Victorian morality is good. The third is that the Soviet Union is the source of nearly every problem in the world, and must be combated through military buildups and the use of force. The Heritage Foundation regularly packages these ideas as promoting "free markets, a strong defense, and traditional values." The unfortunate truth is that a renewed liberalism, armed with one "big idea" about the positive role of government in the economy, will have solved only part of the problem.

DAVID BLANKENHORN
New York, New York

TRB, *from page 4*

a lot of poor people. But there are two things it isn't.

First, it isn't really a business. Even apart from giving away the profit, it's not something you either could or would do out of true capitalist motivation. The natural gas transaction is almost straightforward charity. Kennedy possibly couldn't get the gas, probably couldn't transport it, and certainly couldn't sell it except for the universal understanding that the proceeds were helping poor people. The utilities go along because it's good public relations. I have a sheaf of virtually identical newspaper clips, all featuring grinning photos of Joe Kennedy, a local pol, and the head of the local gas company, with headlines like NYSEG & KENNEDY TEAM UP TO ASSIST NEEDY CUSTOMERS.

In the case of oil, Kennedy is essentially a speculator or arbitrageur on international markets. He may well make money at this, but it has nothing to do with bringing oil to users more efficiently. Indeed, the annual ritual of bringing a tanker of heating oil into Boston harbor is an economically pointless flourish. It would make more sense to cash out all the trading profits and just write the state a check. But that would deny Kennedy his yearly photo opportunity on the bridge of the big ship as it steams into port bearing its cargo of compassion.

The reason others don't play Kennedy's oil game and just pocket the profits is that there isn't enough money in it. William James says that Kennedy's operation saved Massachusetts oil consumers "well over one million dollars" last year. Yet this is the result of transactions involving more than 17 million barrels of oil worth close to half a billion dollars. Kennedy might do almost as well by sending his modestly paid staff out to work in real businesses, and then turning over the difference in their wages to the state fuel assistance program.

The second thing Kennedy's company isn't is a post-Great Society model for addressing social problems without involving the government. Despite all the attention, Citizens Energy provides only two percent of the oil in Massachusetts's fuel oil assistance program. Commercial heating oil distributors are quite frank that they cooperate with the program because it is small and symbolic, while leaving the impression that the private sector is helping poor people to afford heat. It's "turned out to be a great public relations tool for our industry," a trade association official told the *Boston Globe*.

More fundamentally, Citizens Energy doesn't bypass middlemen's profits like a true co-op. Nor does it harness the profit motive in any creative new way. It just tries to make a profit, which it gives away. It would be nice if lots of businessmen decided to turn over all their profits to the poor. But is awaiting this development a very promising solution to pressing social problems?

So if Citizens Energy Corporation isn't much of a business and isn't much of a social agency, what is it? It's a repackaged legend for a third-generation Kennedy: a postmodern Kennedy for the 1980s. It's also a vast publicity machine. The corporate style resembles Chrysler's: very big on the cult of the personality, with Kennedy's mug on every brochure, on billboards around Boston, and in the papers every other day. And what do you know? Kennedy announced this month that he is running for Tip O'Neill's House seat. (See page 16.) This will require a slight midcourse correction at Legend Control. After all, it was only six months ago that Joe told the *Globe* how much politics turns him off. "It's just not in me to do it. It's such a crummy system. . . . I really wonder if it isn't better to go out and do something than fight this ball of molasses."

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Shameless

I'LL ADMIT TO being one of those who thought (at first, anyway) that the headline on THE NEW REPUBLIC's December 9 cover story on political consultant Roger Stone, "The State-of-the-Art Washington Sleazeball," went too far. What's the big deal? Almost everyone in Washington is hustling access to the powerful. But the editor was persuasive. He pointed out that life in Washington wasn't like this ten or 20 years ago. Lobbyists and influence-peddlers used to be embarrassed about their chosen professions. I had become, he said, inured to the whole ugly spectacle. He was right. And I soon realized that Washington has become inured to another ugly spectacle: that of the president of one of the city's few universities hobnobbing and partying and toadying for a buck. At least it's a buck that goes to a fairly decent cause and not to the hobnobber himself. Still, you have to wonder what impression this president, a 47-year-old astronomer named Richard Berendzen, is making on the 11,000 students of the American University, a modest school in a leafy section of Northwest Washington. Like Roger Stone, Berendzen, in the editor's felicitous phrase, "exemplifies a general pushing back of the frontiers of what is considered acceptable" in this town. At the very least, the man should be embarrassed.

BERENDZEN IS HAVING LUNCH at the Madison Hotel on 15th Street with the editor of *Dossier*, a slick monthly magazine that reports on the cavorting of Washington society. At the Madison, writes the editor, Bill Thomas, a veritable "Who's Who of Washington's power elite" is lunching. And they're all saying hello to Berendzen. Here's a bank president. And here's the publisher of the *Washington Post*. And the director of the National Gallery of Art. "I made up my mind early on," Berendzen tells Thomas, "that I would be a part of this scene." Why? "Invisible forces put pressure on you to raise money. The first trick is to put yourself in the company of rich people. . . . Rich people like to be around other rich people, and that's how it works." A few years ago Berendzen snared the Saudi arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi, who is reputed to be the world's wealthiest man, worth ten billion dollars or so. Khashoggi is on the board of the American University and donated five million dollars to help build the Adnan Khashoggi Sports Center. Khashoggi has been doing a little frontier pushing himself lately. As the Church Committee revealed ten years ago in its investigation of multinational arms sales, he's the guy who was paid many millions of dollars by American companies to grease the skids for arms deals with the Saudis. In Berendzen's new book, *Is My Armor Straight?* (a reference to an actual suit of armor he owns and dons for protection against the slings and arrows, etc.), he goes to great pains to justify what his benefactor did. "The practices were not illegal then, although they were questionable." Even though Khashoggi was vindicated, says the president, he's still called "a wheeler-dealer and 'an Arab arms merchant.' " And so Khashoggi forks over .05 percent of his fortune for a basketball court and gets rehabilitated. Berendzen's new book (published by Adler & Adler), a diary of an academic year in which academics is barely mentioned, is mostly a paean to Khashoggi, who, with members of his family, is cited 33 times in the index.

BUT THE BOOK is more than that. It's the most significant social and political document of the New Washington. In his frenetic quest to put A.U. on the map, Berendzen has become the most ubiquitous character in town. His chosen method of aggrandizing the university is shameless self-promotion. Berendzen is everywhere: at a hunt club ball, on the TV show "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous," at the White House. He knows the powerful by their first names, by their nicknames. The book's index, which reads like a year's supply of back issues of *People* magazine, lists Bob Strauss, Chuck Percy, Dan Boorstin, etc., etc. Berendzen's official résumé says that "he has been guest or host on more than 500 radio and TV programs in the U.S. and abroad." It also notes, among the achievements of Berendzen's six-year tenure, that "the net financial worth of [A.U.'s] board has increased by more than $10 billion." (Khashoggi did this all by himself.)

THERE'S ALSO something sweet about Berendzen. Unlike other Washingtonians who operate similar hustles, he's not too cool to admit he's gaga over minor pols and hack movie actors. But you still cringe at these passages: "Today, my schedule lets me stop only briefly at the F Street Club to wish Ursula Meese a happy birthday. . . . She asked that only a dozen people be invited. Gail [Berendzen's wife] and I are pleased to be among them, along with her husband, Ed. Here I stand talking to the counselor to the president." Khashoggi flies Berendzen around in his 727. A friend gets him a room at the Helmsley Palace: "With magnificent common rooms, the Palace deserves its name. But as I sit alone at dinner and later look out my window across Saint Patrick's Cathedral, I remember that what counts is not where you are but whom you are with." Well, yes. Finally, Berendzen and his wife are invited to the White House, to a state dinner for the president of Austria. You can tell that he is a little miffed by the seating arrangements—he's next to Phyllis Diller. But things look up when he and his wife get out on the dance floor: "As we whirl about the room, we watch Dom DeLuise clowning at the sideline and Larry Hagman deep in conversation. Gail leans close to my ear and whispers, 'We've done a lot together, haven't we?' 'Indeed we have. And I wonder how much more life will bring us?' 'I don't know. But I feel pretty giddy.' 'On that, you're not alone,' I whisper, as we glide past Baroness Von Trapp, Ted Turner, Dorothy Hamill, and the vice-president."

WHEN ARCHAEOLOGISTS dig up Washington 2,000 years from now, they will puzzle over two mysteries: (1) Why did the ancient Greeks colonize the Potomac basin, building marble temples? and (2) What are we to make of this fellow Berendzen, who was president of the national university and thus obviously the leading scholar of his day? Why did he spend so much time in the company of arms merchants, hack politicians, and stand-up comedians? Is this the way Washington really worked?

J.K.G.

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...great revolutions..." *"We know lots of revolutions, great revolutions, and magnificent people, who after taking over power, produced systems that were much worse than the ones they destroyed. We don't want to make this mistake. We will not."*

--Polish Solidarity leader Lech Walesa in a "Morning Edition" interview in Gdansk, Poland, with National Public Radio's European correspondent Neal Conan.

"I never share blame, I never share credit, and I never share desserts. It's just not my style."

--Beverly Sills, New York City Opera general director, in an interview on National Public Radio's "Morning Edition."

"Drunk they (the Russians) defeated Napoleon. Drunk they beat Hitler. Drunk they could win against NATO."

--Edward Luttwak, defense analyst and author of "The Pentagon and the Art of War," talking with National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" host Bob Edwards about Soviet military strength.

"We are so different, and yet, we are all one." *"I've never seen so many women, of so many different ages, colors, sizes and shapes, and I think it's amazing. We are so different, and yet, we are all one.*

--A delegate to the United Nations' World Conference on Women, talking with National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" co-host Susan Stamberg in Nairobi, Kenya.

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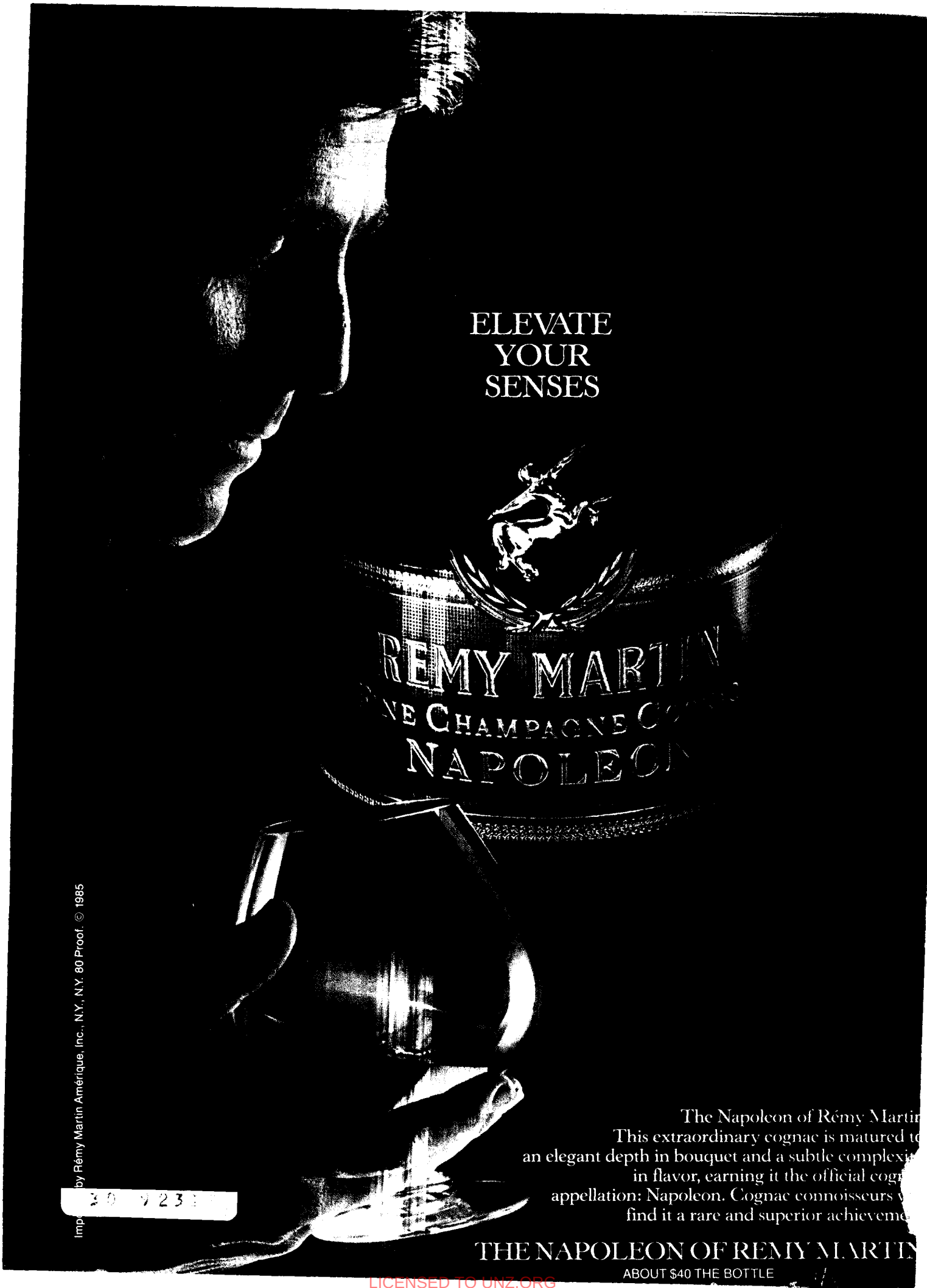

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